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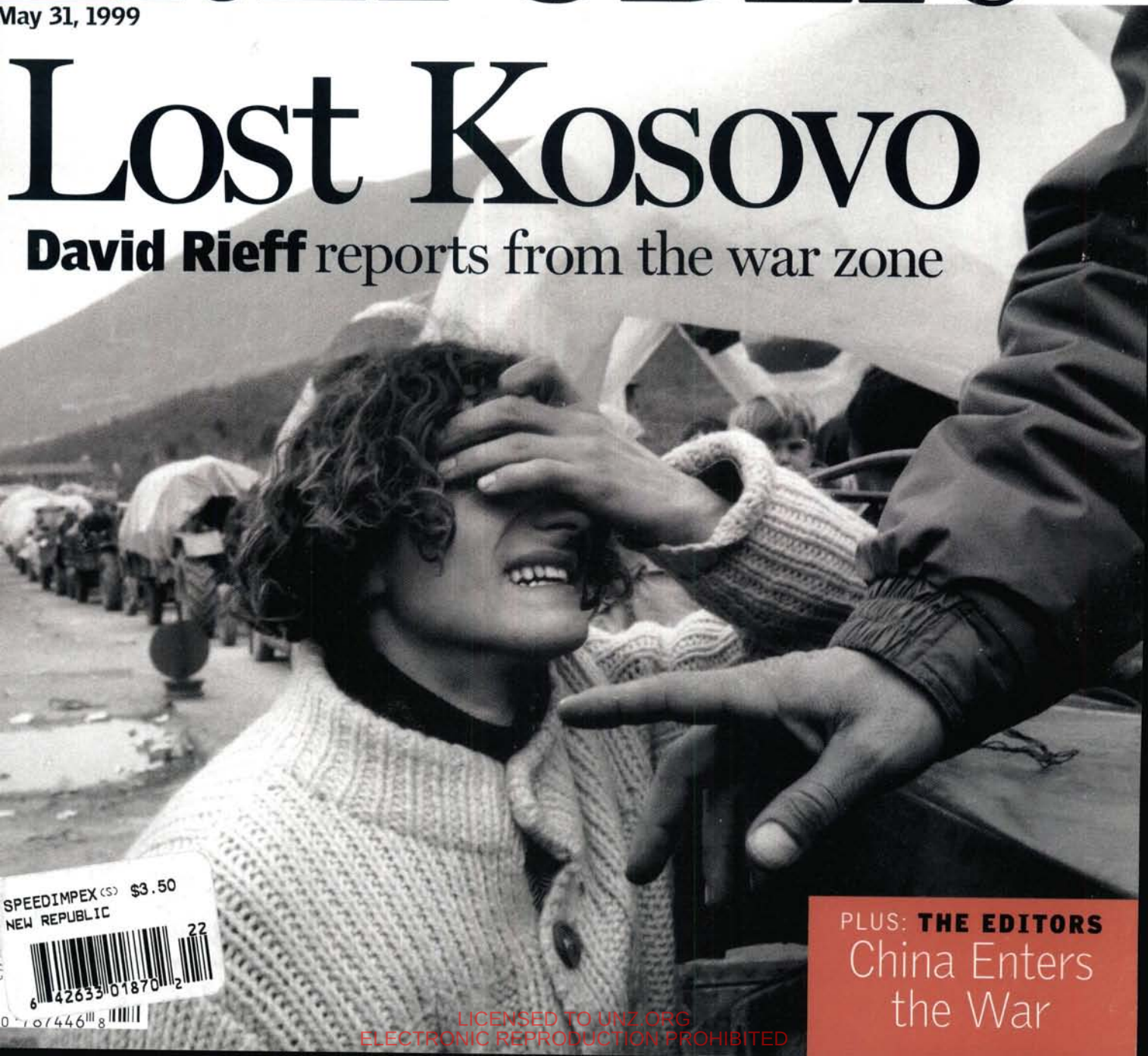

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Issues in Health Care

#2 in a series

Let's give first-class pharmaceutical coverage to seniors.

by Alan F. Holmer

Should all seniors have insurance coverage for prescription medicines?

Given the key role modern medicines play in saving lives, raising the quality of life and helping people avoid more invasive and expensive treatments, the answer is "Yes—definitely." The real question is: "What's the best way to do this while ensuring quality care and nurturing innovation?"

Some say, "Just let the government do it." But government-run plans tend to be heavy on regulations, controls and red tape—and not so heavy on quality. Ask a Medicaid patient who has to go through the hassle of getting "prior authorization" from a state bureaucracy before he or she can get the medicine the doctor thinks would work best. Or ask a hospital, which has to comply with more than 111,000 pages of Medicare rules and regulations for treating elderly patients.

A better way would build on the private sector system that, while not perfect, is providing quality care for the vast majority of Americans, including many seniors. By relying on competition among private plans and choices for patients to ensure quality, while holding down costs, this system helped hold prescription drug price inflation to 3.2 percent last year. The government would pay most of the premium for the private sector plan each senior chooses, with added assistance for low-income beneficiaries. In order to compete for Medicare business, the plans would have to offer quality care. Innovative prescription drugs—because they are, in many cases, the most cost-effective form of health care—would be an integral part of many of these plans.

Price controls have never produced anything but shortages, long waits and impediments to innovation—prices seniors can't afford to pay.

Furthermore, providing all seniors access to innovative prescription drugs will help contain costs. There will be fewer trips to the hospital and fewer doctor visits, and more people will be able to maintain their independence and take care of themselves. But, over the long term, this will only hold true if we keep the cures and breakthroughs coming. As the population ages, the need for cures for diseases such as Alzheimer's, arthritis, stroke, heart disease, cancer, Parkinson's and many others will increase. Without cures or more effective treatments, the cost of caring for all of the elderly with these diseases will skyrocket.

U.S. pharmaceutical companies are investing tens of billions of dollars each year in the search for cures for these diseases. It is no accident that the United States leads the world in pharmaceutical R&D and that U.S. companies have developed the lion's share of important drugs during the past few decades. It's because, in contrast to the rest of the world, the United States has a relatively free market for pharmaceuticals—one that rewards risk-taking with at least the possibility of commensurate profit. If we distort this market—by imposing price controls on medicines for seniors—we will slow the progress that all of us, including seniors, so desperately need. Price controls have never produced anything but shortages, long waits and impediments to innovation—prices seniors can't afford to pay.

So, let's not impose a government-run, regulation-ridden, second-class health care system on America's seniors. Instead, let's modernize Medicare and allow seniors to choose among competing private health plans that offer high-quality, integrated care. This approach will provide first-class care for seniors, while ensuring the continuation of medical progress so vital to the health of not only seniors, but also of future generations.

PhRMA

Alan F. Holmer is President of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, which represents the country's leading research-based pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

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True intentions

TO THE EDITORS:

The reference to "Iraq's Sunni majority" in the recent *Foreign Affairs* article "The Rollback Fantasy" cited in your April 12 Notebook came not from authors Daniel Byman, Kenneth Pollack, and Gideon Rose, whose original text did not include the phrase, but rather from an editing error. Our forthcoming issue contains an erratum correcting the mistake.

JAMES F. HOGE JR.
Editor, Foreign Affairs
New York, New York

Case closed

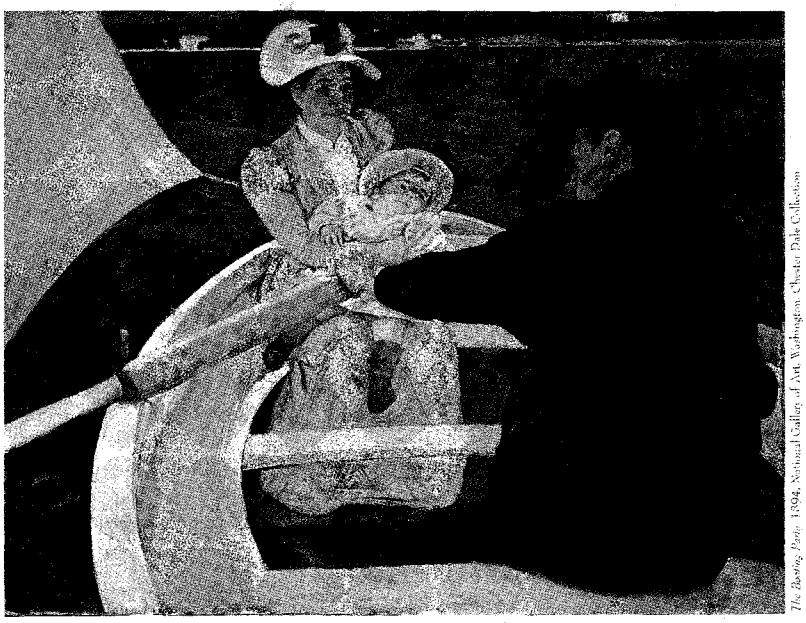
TO THE EDITORS:

Richard A. Posner's review of my book *The Crime of Sheila McGough* uncannily illustrates one of its leitmotifs: society's need to expel what is strange and different, what isn't regular and normal, and its way of dealing with the troublesomely odd people who threaten to gum up its machinery ("In the Fraud Archives," April 19). Such people are usually cordoned off with the labels of mental illness, but sometimes, as in the case of Sheila McGough, they are criminalized instead. Sheila McGough was a woman who probably should not have become a lawyer, because the stresses of legal work seem to have exacerbated her stubbornly unconventional and ungainly way of going about things. But anyone who happened to know her, or who took the time to learn more about her case than the trial transcript permitted, might have had doubts about her conviction and imprisonment.

Posner does not venture beyond the trial transcript and takes it as the final word on the case—or, rather, he takes the prosecution's view of the case as the final word. His review is in large part an incurious retelling of the prosecution's narrative. As such, it illustrates another of my book's themes, namely, the paucity in law, as in life, of indisputable facts. The "damaging evidence" of Sheila McGough's guilt that Posner claims to have found in the transcript is, of course, nothing more than the usual combination of disputed testimony and transparent advocacy that *forms a trial transcript. Yes, there are* some "open and shut" cases in law, but most cases cannot be so described. It is the beauty and the problem of our system of advocacy law that doubt hovers and lingers over almost every case that comes to trial. No member of any jury—even in the apparently "open and shut" cases—can ever know for sure what happened or who is lying and who is telling the truth. He can only do his best; he can only try to follow the judge's standard instruction to "consider each witness's intelligence, motive, and state of mind, and demeanor and manner while on the witness stand." (Implicit in this instruction is the assumption that some witnesses will not be truthful.) Like me, Posner did not attend the trial of Sheila McGough and could not study the witnesses to gain a sense of their credibility. Unlike me, he felt no interest in doing so. As I noted in my book: "Society wants closure and provides itself with it. A conviction is extremely hard to overturn." As an agent of the desire for closure, Posner is naturally impervious to the doubts my book casts on the narrative he so confidently presents as if it had been written by God rather than by a capable government lawyer.

Finally, Posner's review is animated by a spirit of suspicion and absolutism that is not foreign to legal discourse but does it little credit. Posner accuses me of literary fraud because I based my interpretation on representative parts of the case rather than on its diffuse entirety. The possibility that I made my selections in the interests of clarity and understanding, rather than deception and tendentiousness, doesn't

Her paintings had
a new and different perspective.
A woman's.



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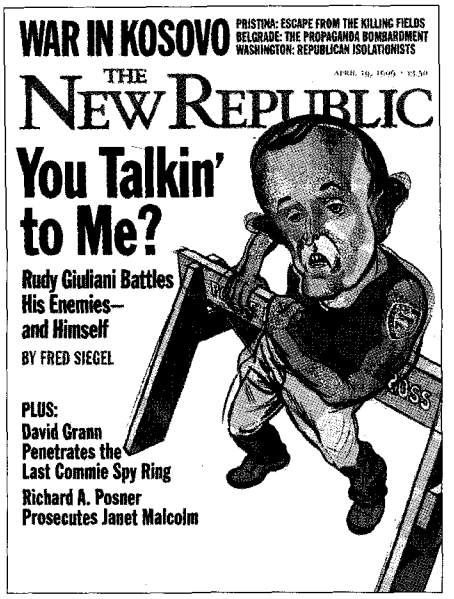
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BY FRED SIEGEL
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David Grann Penetrates the Last Commie Spy Ring
Richard A. Posner Prosecutes Janet Malcolm

occur to him. Let me assure the reader that I wrote my book in good faith and never foreclosed the possibility that I was wrong in my views. Posner, by contrast, writes with a scary kind of certainty. It may be an occupational hazard.

JANET MALCOLM
New York, New York

TO THE EDITORS:

I was appellate counsel for Sheila McGough, whose case is the subject of *The Crime of Sheila McGough* by Janet Malcolm. While Richard A. Posner criticizes Malcolm for writing a "deeply irresponsible book" by not addressing evidence which he believes incriminated Sheila McGough, Posner does what he castigates Malcolm of doing: he ignores evidence in the record—much of it not presented at McGough's trial but only disclosed in post-trial proceedings—that undermines Posner's conclusions. The facts of the case are complex, but the following are some significant points:

Posner refers to a transaction in which McGough allegedly "appropriated" a deposit of $25,000 for an insurance charter paid by an individual named Johnson, noting that McGough allegedly told Johnson that Bob Bailes was "on the road" and did not disclose that Bailes was in prison at the time of the closing. However, Johnson had testified in a prior civil case that he knew that the reason for Bailes's absence from the closing was that Bailes was in jail and that McGough was the one who told him. Johnson's prior testimony was not disclosed in McGough's criminal trial.

The contract did not provide that McGough hold Johnson's deposit in escrow, and, after the closing, Johnson paid an *additional* $85,000 to Bailes through McGough's trust account; McGough clearly had no obligation to hold that money. Johnson testified in the prior suit—not disclosed at McGough's trial—that he did not believe that he had been defrauded in the transaction. These facts also rebut Posner's argument that the "only purpose" for making deposits to McGough's trust account was to have them held until closing; these payments were made *after* the closing. Lawyers often receive funds on behalf of clients through their trust accounts, not because there is any escrow obligation, but simply for convenience (and often to ensure payment of the lawyer's fee).

Posner acknowledges that some of the principals in the $75,000 transaction (the bulk of the case against McGough) were "disreputable" but does not report the extent of their wrongdoing, again, much of which was not disclosed at McGough's trial. One witness had approximately $200,000 in tax judgments and penalties resulting from the witness's own mishandling of client's funds earmarked for tax and other payments; another witness, whom the government described as "unimpeachable," was later convicted of grand larceny and disbarred; a third principal was convicted of facilitating prostitution businesses. While Posner argues that the fact that these persons were "shady" makes it likely that they would have insisted that the $75,000 be held in escrow, they were not dealing with their own money. By contriving a claim against McGough, they enabled the payer to recoup the $75,000 from the "deep pocket" of McGough's insurance company, not from the "shady" principals themselves.

Posner agrees that the government did not proffer a persuasive explanation for McGough's motivation to commit these alleged crimes; McGough received minimal compensation for her work, and Posner states that McGough appears to have been conned by Bailes, noting that for McGough to have believed in Bailes "was dumb but not criminal." Why, then, did Sheila McGough spend nearly three years in prison?

Posner states that McGough's case merely presented "example[s] of the loose ends found in all cases," a far more disturbing statement about our system of justice than anything that Malcolm has written. Posner is surely correct that the prosecution of Sheila McGough cannot be evaluated without consideration of all of the facts—many of which are still unknown because the courts rejected McGough's challenges to her conviction without conducting any evidentiary hearings. Malcolm's book, and responses to it such as the one Posner has written, should spark a public debate on the question of whether Sheila McGough was

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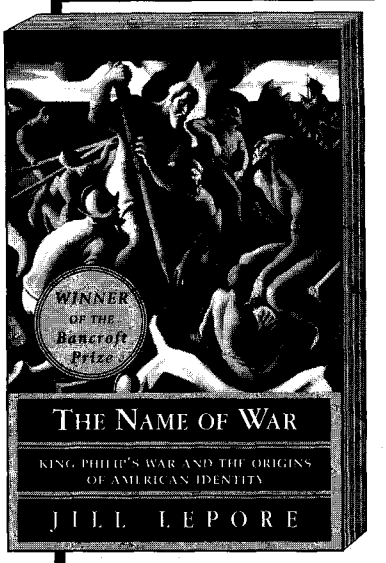

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

War Fair

THE REPUBLICANS who attack the Kosovo bombing because America didn't intervene in Rwanda or Liberia would be a little more credible had they shown more concern when those crises actually occurred. But they have a point nonetheless. America's Kosovo war is unintelligible without reference to the race of the victims. To win popular support, a humanitarian campaign must evoke in American minds certain moral associations—associations that are extremely difficult to conjure in an African context. In that sense, racism does indeed underlie what we are doing in Kosovo. And yet an understanding of that racism does not invalidate our intervention; quite the opposite.

The public debate over Kosovo is not about whether the Serbs are doing ghastly things to the Kosovars; even isolationists admit that. It is about whether those ghastly things are normal for that part of the world or whether they are aberrant. When isolationists say that people in the Balkans have been killing one another for centuries, what they mean is that America cannot impose a political solution because the problem is not, at base, political. Milosevic is simply expressing a Balkan cultural, or even biological, predisposition that will express itself regardless of who is in power. On the other hand, when hawks say they cannot believe this is happening in Europe, they mean that the Serbs, as Europeans, are capable of civilized behavior. Something, or someone, out of the ordinary is responsible for the horror, and, if we can remove it, or him, civilization will return. This is why interventionists compare Milosevic to Hitler, and his government to the Nazis. Leaders and regimes, unlike primordial tribal feuds, can be changed politically.

Which brings us to Africa. Americans are not indifferent to images of dying Africans. But most Americans are not analytically equipped to see African slaughter as aberrant. They lack an image of normal, healthy African civilization—partly, to be sure, because African countries are less stable and economically developed than Western ones, but also because those countries receive little American media attention except when they are in crisis. The argument employed in the Balkans—that savagery is the norm and therefore intervention will not change anything—is far more debilitating when applied to Africa, where Americans have no countervailing moral context. When was the last time you heard an American say, "I can't believe that such barbarism is happening on the continent of Africa"?

The Western tendency to see the hatreds of the present as an extension of ancient patterns, strong in the Balkans but much stronger in Africa, owes much to the unfortunate legacy of colonial anthropology. For most of Europe's century-long colonization of Africa, anthropology was the dominant intellectual framework through which the West viewed the continent. In Britain, in particular, anthropology was crucial to "indirect rule"—the policy of leaving a colonized tribe's social structure intact so it could be administered by a handful of colonial officials on the ground. To preserve social structures, Britain needed anthropologists to study them. And ethnographies conducted with an eye toward preservation tended, not surprisingly, to depict African societies as static. This assumption—combined with the fact that African history and political science did not exist as academic disciplines prior to independence—left a strong Western predisposition to see African tribal conflict as primal and unchanging rather than as the product of political decisions by particular regimes.

One of the central preoccupations of post-'60s scholarship about Africa has been to debunk this assumption, to show that contemporary ethnic loyalties and hatreds are modern inventions. But this revisionism has not really penetrated the public consciousness. Instead, as the early "End of History" optimism of the post-cold-war era faded, the age-old-hatred idea gained more and more currency. The Rwanda genocide, for instance, was rarely explained in political terms—as the brainchild of hypernationalists from a particular party who came to power by assassinating a president of their own tribe. *The New York Times* called the killings the continuation of a "centuries-old history of tribal warfare," even though historians agree that the terms Hutu and Tutsi were designations of social class, not ethnicity, until the twentieth century. The idea that sustains the intervention in Kosovo—namely, that if you deal with Milosevic the horrors will end—was virtually impossible in Rwanda, where Americans didn't even know the names of the leaders who tried to systematically murder their countrymen.

Even in Somalia, where, at the high point of post-cold-war optimism, George Bush sent in troops to protect the delivery of food, our inability to view the crisis in political terms helped doom the operation. Because the fighting was seen as the product of historic tribal enmities (notwithstanding the fact that almost everyone in Somalia comes from the same tribe), no moral distinction was ever made between one "warlord" and another. In Kosovo, the Clinton administration has played down its problems with the Kosovo Liberation Army for fear that Americans would see no moral difference between the government and the rebels. But, in Somalia, America's fight with Mohammed Farah Aideed seemed utterly pointless because, as far as Americans knew, Aideed was no worse than the leader of any other Somali faction.

Many Kosovo hawks rightly suspect that those who insist America must act the same way in Africa as in the Balkans really want a policy of color-blind, nondiscriminatory, moral indifference. They believe it is better to act on behalf of some groups than on behalf of none at all, even if the selection criterion has an ugly history to it. But the racial aspect of the Kosovo campaign is more than simply an embarrassment. Kosovo is a war to expand the frontiers of America's moral community. Those who say that the people of the Balkans are culturally or genetically programmed to kill one another are saying that they are all, victims and victimizers, essentially unlike us. The argument is not explicitly racialist, but it has racialist roots. A century ago, many in America and Western Europe said the same thing but took it for granted that this was because the people of the Balkans represented a foreign race. As Yale historian Matthew Frye Jacobson writes in *Whiteness of a Different Color*, most Americans in the 1890s thought that Slavs "held as poor a claim to the color 'white' as the Japanese." America has progressed over the past 100 years, because of mass immigration and a widening of our democracy, to the point where many Americans see the Serbs and the Kosovars as racially and morally like us. If this war succeeds, maybe in another century we will include the Hutus and Tutsis within that moral circle as well. If it fails, we certainly will not.

PETER BEINART

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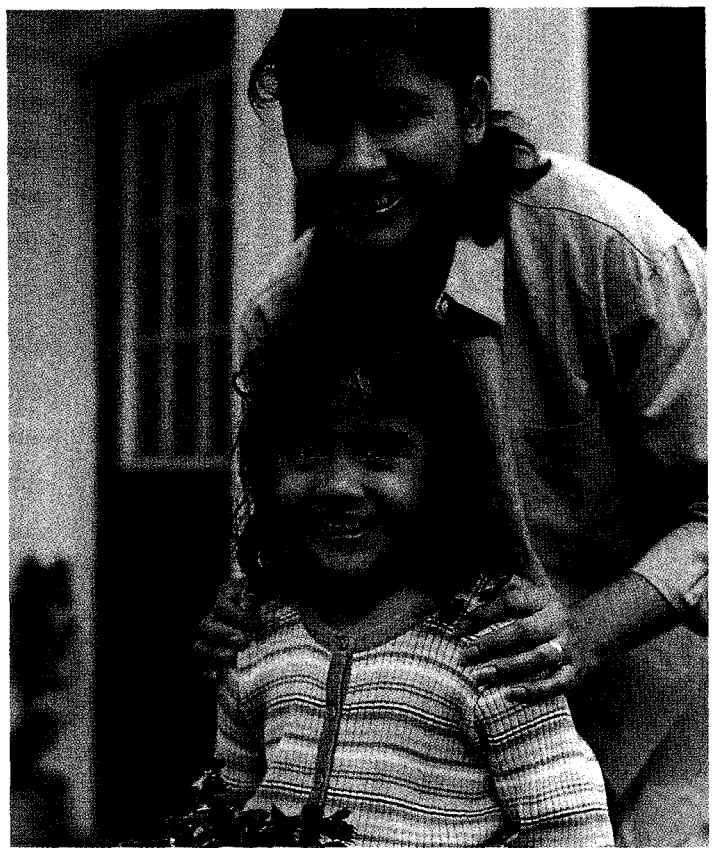

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WHITE HOUSE WATCH

Map Flap

A CLINTON ROSE GARDEN appearance, like a NATO raid, is meticulously planned. A uniformed military guard escorts guests to their seats, while aides check the sound levels and affix the presidential seal to the lectern just so. But, even at the political equivalent of a satellite-guided missile strike, things sometimes go awry—which is precisely what happened on Monday, May 10.

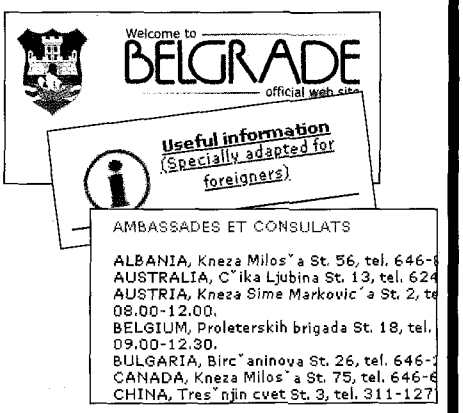
The occasion was another touchy-feely White House meeting with a Rose Garden finale, this one on "Children, Violence, and Responsibility." After a couple of hours of chatter, Clinton was to enter the garden and, inevitably, pronounce the day's meeting a huge success. Instead, Clinton arrived an hour late, and it was already clear that the whole event would be overshadowed by NATO's bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. More than half of the seats in the Rose Garden went unoccupied, and entertainment executives didn't show, leaving Clinton to address the sweaty journalists who had been corralled in the back behind a rope.

As the event concluded, a teenage boy who somehow wound up among the press corps shouted a question. Clinton ignored the query, just as he had ignored the bellicose Sam Donaldson. But the teenager, Alex, would not be deterred. He climbed over the rope and made a beeline for Clinton. A press aide shooed the boy, but Alex shrewdly ignored her and ambushed Clinton. The surprised president answered the boy's question, but then Alex piped up with another question, and another, as reporters gathered around. The kid had follow-ups! Clinton, once again, didn't have an exit strategy. "Alex three, Sam zero," somebody yelled, as Donaldson left. Thus did the Rose Garden event on violent children miss its mark.

The air war in Yugoslavia, likewise, continues to diverge from the script in embarrassing ways: a civilian convoy hit here, a passenger train there, and now—oh, my—the Chinese Embassy. The explanation is that the CIA was using an outdated map, an explanation that is fast becoming the dog-ate-my-homework excuse of modern military mishap. We heard a similar line when the American jet sliced through a ski-lift cable in Italy: the cable wasn't on the map. Perhaps the American strike on a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan, suspected (apparently erroneously) of being a terrorist site, was also the fault of our careless cartographers.

Either way, the error has top-level officials at the White House pondering just what kind of morons are drawing our military maps. "There definitely was a don't-hit list," a senior aide explained. The list included the Chinese Embassy, he said, but used its former address.

How hard would it have been to get this right? I asked TNR reporter-researcher Tyce Palmaffy to investigate, and within a few minutes of surfing the Internet he was able to find what had eluded the best minds of the American intelligence community: the correct address for the Chinese Embassy, Trešnjin cvet St. 3. If CIA spooks are curious, they can go to *www.beograd.org.yu*, Belgrade's official web page. There, it says, "you can find many important information," including museums, restaurants, and, for those visitors planning a bombing raid while in town, a list of embassies.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09.00-12.30.
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CANADA, Kneza Milos˘a St. 75, tel. 646-6
CHINA, Tres˘njin cvet St. 3, tel. 311-127
Intelligence source.

Clinton, while quick to apologize, made clear the mistake won't change America's China policy or NATO's strategy. I agree completely. In fact, as a show of American determination to stand up to China and Serbia, NATO should select a couple of other targets from *www.beograd.org.yu*. I suggest two Chinese restaurants, Lon Fon, located on Kej Oslobodjenja, and Peking, at Vuka Karadica St. 2. This would send Beijing a clear signal. While we're at it, NATO could counter Greek protests against the bombing by dropping one on Olympic Airways, on 29 Novembar St., telephone number 3226-800 (phone ahead—the office may have moved). Some will say this is not fair play, and they are correct. The "Fair Play" cabaret is at Terazije St. 25; it should be added to the don't-hit list.

The inexplicable bombing of the Chinese Embassy is just the latest problem with the war effort. There's a chorus of criticism about the futility of a mistake-prone air war without the threat of ground troops and suspicion that the United States and NATO will soften their conditions for a settlement. Now comes a pointless disruption of U.S.-China relations.

The view from the National Security Council, however, seems oddly sanguine. China, one senior official told me, will get over it. "Their interest will be to engage with us," he said. And, despite all the criticism of the damage to NATO's standing, the official said, "the alliance has stood up to the plate." As for the war effort itself, "things are very much on course," the official declared. Milosevic is "feeling the heat" and will soon back down.

One hopes Clinton and his advisers are correct about all of this. But, at the same time, White House officials have been showing some worrying signs of fatigue with the Kosovo crisis, as they change the subject and blame the press for its obsession with foreign policy—much as they once blamed the media for harping on the Lewinsky scandal.

On the Monday and Tuesday following the Chinese Embassy bombing, for example, Clinton proceeded with scheduled events on youth violence and inner-city finance. Both were worthwhile ideas, and Monday's event even produced a modest agreement with gun manufacturers. Clinton's domestic staff would like some credit for this. "But for the foreign policy in Kosovo, you all might pay a little bit more attention," a top Clinton lieutenant told me. Adviser Ann Lewis said that, while the press is worried about China and Yugoslavia, Americans are still focused on the Littleton shootings. "The public has a longer attention span," she said.

What Clintonites really seem to hope is that the public will forget the promises of victory made just a few weeks ago. Clinton and his aides think that a little finesse at home can erase a bad situation in Kosovo. But they can't pretend the war effort is on schedule while seeking to return to the old event-of-the-day format at home. China and Russia are both hopping mad. Our China engagement policy is in tatters. NATO is in danger of destroying itself by waging a war from 30,000 feet. And the Kosovar Albanians are still being brutalized. As important as gun control is, the press shouldn't be faulted for its current obsession overseas. The White House can't change the subject. The way to spin this war is to win it.

DANA MILBANK

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A POLICE VIEW ON THE WAR ON DRUGS

Statement of Chief Hubert Williams, President, Police Foundation, March 25, 1999

A fundamental police role is to enforce and uphold the rule of the law, and to do so equitably without regard to race, ethnicity, or social or economic status. Sadly, for much of the Nation's history, the legal order has not only countenanced but sustained slavery, segregation, and discrimination. And the fact that the police were bound to uphold that order, set a pattern for police behavior and attitudes toward minority communities that has persisted until the present day.

In no arena is this continued discrimination more apparent than in America's "war on drugs." Police chiefs have enough problems dealing with misconduct and abuse of authority by some officers without the added burden of having to enforce laws that are themselves mechanisms for discrimination, in the tradition of the Jim Crow era in American history. Obligating the police to enforce unjust laws, most often in inner-city and minority communities, perpetuated the legacy of fear and mistrust, and further erodes relations between the police and the community.

Not only is current drug policy targeting minority citizens in numbers disproportionate to their numbers in the general population and the drug-using population, but these policies are driving differential enforcement practices in many communities. Police are making more arrests than ever for non-violent drug offenses. Although they constitute only 13 percent of the drug-using population, African Americans are arrested at a rate five times greater than white Americans. Simply put, drug arrests are easier to make in inner-city neighborhoods where drug markets operate more openly than in middle-class areas. Police enforcement strategies that target inner-city neighborhoods as the primary method for addressing the drug problem will produce attractive statistics from a quantitative perspective, but qualitatively the results will be skewed towards small-time users and dealers. The big fish who finance and supply the drug markets will go unscathed, but the prisons will be filled with the poor and underprivileged members who live in these neighborhoods.

A recent Police Foundation survey found that over 95 percent of rank-and-file police officers believe that the most effective way to control crime is by working *with* citizens and communities. What has come to be known as "community-oriented policing" is predicated upon community trust in and support of police in order to form and maintain police-community partnerships to combat crime and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods. Discriminatory laws that force discriminatory enforcement seriously undermine the ability of police to engage minority communities as partners in the "war against crime." Without this community involvement and support, vital information essential for crime control does not flow to the police, and both the community and law enforcement suffer as a consequence.

Visit Drug War Facts at: www.csdp.org

Paid for by Common Sense for Drug Policy Kevin B. Zeese, President, 703-354-5694, 703-354-5695 (fax), info@csdp.org

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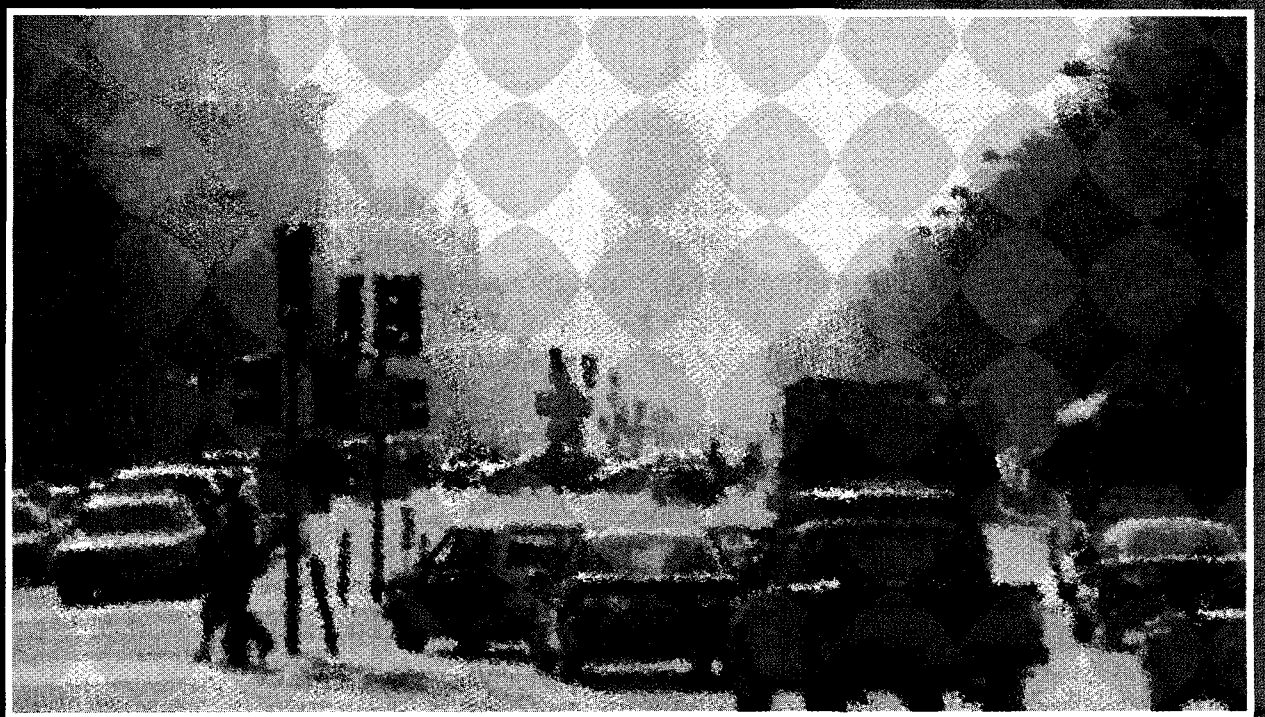

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Bill Paxon, *National Chairman*

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Embassy Row

THE DISASTROUS MISTAKEN bombing of the Chinese Embassy must be a learning experience for the United States, and not just because it has exposed the flaws in our military mapmaking. On a deeper level, the event, and China's violent reaction to it, should serve as a wake-up call to the Clinton administration and all others who still accept the contention that "engagement" with China can bring fundamental and lasting change in how we are viewed by that Communist nation.

The state-sponsored mob attacks on the U.S. Embassy in Beijing were not just a calculated breakdown in the dictatorship's notoriously effective crowd-control system, as Senator John McCain mordantly noted. They showed how deeply rooted anti-foreign sentiment remains in Chinese political culture. It was sobering to observe the apparently authentic passion of protesting Chinese university students, who have come of age at a time of great U.S. cultural and economic "contact" with China. It was even more sobering to see how eager the Chinese leadership is to exploit such sentiments when it suits the government's purposes.

Those purposes are both to channel public discontent away from the dictatorship itself and to extort economic and diplomatic concessions from the United States. At the moment, China has its eyes on securing membership in the World Trade Organization on favorable terms; the only negotiations with the United States that China did not shut down after the embassy bombing were those over the WTO. In this regard, engagement enthusiasts here play into China's hands when they blame the United States for balking at including China in the WTO. If China really wanted the friendship the Clinton administration so doggedly proffers, it wouldn't play this game.

Of course, the Chinese are merely taking a leaf from Russia's book. Even if the Yeltsin government has proven itself inept, corrupt, and mercurial—as this week's sudden firing of Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov demonstrated once again—it is good at one thing: manipulating the Clinton administration, which has responded only tepidly to Russia's dual-use technology transfers to places like Iraq and Iran, while shoveling more money into such dubious ventures as the Russian space program. The Balkan peninsula has long been a favorite zone of mischief-making for Moscow. Yet, rather than calling the Russians' purported brotherly interest in the fate of the Serbs what it is—the bluff of a fading superpower—the Clintonites have responded by giving Russia more diplomatic influence and more International Monetary Fund loans.

The Clinton administration steadfastly kept up the NATO campaign despite lectures about the morality of the air attacks from Boris Yeltsin ("barbaric" he called it) and Jiang Zemin (who labeled the clearly unintentional attack on the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade "severe aggression"). It is nevertheless galling that the administration has refrained from forthrightly taking on this rhetoric, perhaps by pointing out that Yeltsin's bloody and pointless campaign against Chechnya could have benefited from some American-style concern for "collateral damage" or by noting that, Tiananmen aside, Jiang is the unapologetic heir to a monstrous Maoist regime responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of its own people. In any case, what really bothers both Moscow and Beijing about the prospect of freedom for Kosovo is that it might set a precedent for their own restive national minorities. These countries—still empires, really—do not condemn ethnic cleansing because they can so easily picture circumstances under which they might do something similar themselves.

Much has been written about the similarities between this bombing campaign and the failed war in Vietnam. Most of this is hyperbolic, but in a certain key strategic respect the analogy is apt. First, the United States entered both wars having decided that its objectives were not worth risking confrontation with Russia and China. This led to self-imposed restraints on the type and intensity of force that we would deploy (in Vietnam, no ground assault on North Vietnam; in Kosovo, no ground forces at all). Both then and now, the principal remaining option was a campaign of

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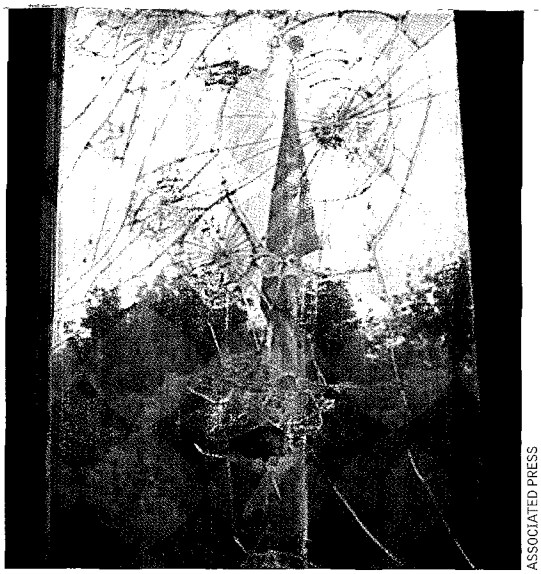
gradually escalated bombing, which gives the enemy time to respond and to draw in outside players that serve its cause. Today, those outside players include not only Russia and China but also the peace movements of the West and, most recently, the secretary-general of the United Nations, whose new interventions evince much pique at NATO's perceived slightings of the United Nations but very little outrage at what Milosevic is doing to the ethnic Albanians.

The Clinton administration has fallen all over itself apologizing to the Chinese government for the embassy attack. Yet these lavish (and, to us, excessively repeated) apologies raise an interesting question. The United States and NATO have shown themselves willing to express regrets to Serbs for mistaken civilian deaths, to ethnic Albanians for mistaken refugee deaths, and, now, to the Chinese for mistaken journalist deaths. The one letter of regret the allies seem unwilling even to contemplate writing, however, is that standard telegram that would go out to the family of each American or NATO soldier who would be killed if we were to deploy the ground troops who could still salvage victory. The willingness to shoulder any kind of cost except for that one is prolonging the war and steadily driving NATO toward defeat—a defeat whose price tag will be measured not in scores of NATO casualties but in thousands of civilians who will be ethnically cleansed, today and in the future, in a Europe where it has been shown that not even the world's most powerful nation can effectively stand in the way of mass expulsion and murder. ■



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mobbed in Beijing.

NOTEBOOK

WE'LL MISS YA: Robert Rubin, who resigned as secretary of the Treasury on May 12, was a model public servant who devoted himself modestly and effectively to promoting America's interests. He can take considerable credit for the Clinton administration's success in economic policy. In Clinton's first year in office, Rubin convinced the president that, by giving priority to cutting the budget deficit, he would reduce upward pressure on interest rates and help spark a recovery. Rubin was proven right. At the beginning of Clinton's second term, Rubin prevented him from acceding to the disastrous balanced budget amendment. Though a fiscal conservative, Rubin was also a champion of distributional equity—and, thus, the scourge of Republicans. The former investment banker infuriated House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Ways and Means Chairman Bill Archer by rejecting their efforts to cut capital gains taxes. "They don't understand how a wealthy guy like Rubin can oppose these things," one Democrat remarked after a heated White House meeting with congressional leaders. Rubin's most difficult challenges were the recurrent financial crises in Mexico, East Asia, Russia, and Latin America, the recession in Japan, and rising American trade deficits with both Japan and China. And while he didn't always perform flawlessly—he was partly responsible for the International Monetary Fund's initial mishandling of the Asian crisis—he exhibited a remarkable sangfroid through it all. The stock market tumbled upon word of his departure, then quickly recovered—a reflection both of his unique importance and of the strong economy of whose maintenance he was instrumental.

FILM THEORY: It's obvious that Slobodan Milosevic has a certain affinity for *Wag the Dog*: in the opening days of the NATO air strikes, Serbian TV broadcast the movie around the clock. But it wasn't until this week, when Goran Matic, Milosevic's minister without portfolio, briefed reporters on the Kosovar refugee crisis, that we had any idea just how deep that affinity was. Matic claimed that what the world had assumed were refugees—driven from their homes by Serbian police and paramilitary units—were in fact 3,000 or so ethnic Albanian "actors," paid $5.50 each (way below union scale we might add) by the CIA to take part in a NATO "screenplay." And how did this cast of mere thousands play the role of 700,000 refugees? Well, according to Matic, by marching around the Balkans in a big circle, stopping first in Macedonia, then Albania, and then Montenegro, before finally heading back to Kosovo, where they continued to march in a circle. It's unclear whether Matic thinks that the Muslims ethnically cleansed in Bosnia beginning in 1992 were also paid actors. But, if he does, that would make "The Butcher of the Balkans" one of the longest-running off-off-Broadway shows in history.

WRONG WEAPON: Focus on the Chinese Embassy bombing diverted world attention from the other NATO mistake made on the same day: a U.S. munition that struck a hospital in Nis, Yugoslavia, killing 15 civilians. Unlike the embassy incident, what happened at Nis was inexcusable—because the weapon used was a cluster bomb. Cluster bombs are antipersonnel weapons that spray shrapnel over a broad area. They're generally designed to kill soldiers but do little against fixed targets. So what was NATO doing dropping antipersonnel weapons near civilians in the first place? NATO briefers say the cluster bomb that went awry was aimed at a nearby Serb airfield. But, while some cluster bombs are indeed suitable for putting craters in runways, the particular one dropped on Nis was not—making the choice of this weapon bizarre indeed. Pentagon officials must be relieved that the focus on the Chinese's stage-managed anger has diverted attention from a greater and more genuine tragedy—the sort of mistake for which we haven't yet seen a good explanation, and for which someone really should be held responsible. ■

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Making guns safer.

Load and Lock

By GREGG EASTERBROOK

TWO OF THE four weapons used in the Columbine High massacre, the Hi-Point 9mm carbine and the Intratec TEC-DC9 semiauto, are popular on the gun circuit because they look zoomy. The Intratec is designed to look like something used by commandos, the Hi-Point to look like a weapon issued to space marines for combat in orbit. The popularity of these guns reminds us that weapons manufacturers constantly redesign their products for appearance, features, and target-market appeal. Don't want futuristic, for instance? Then check out Smith & Wesson's "Ladysmith" gun series, designed with that feminine touch. Design features added to guns for marketing purposes are often as cosmetic as the features of car or clothing marketing—the TEC-DC9 may give users a commando feel, but no genuine commando would ever wield this inaccurate and jam-prone hunk of junk. Of course, that does not prevent them from being deadly to the helpless.

But, though gun manufacturers invest considerable sums in designing for appearance and firepower, what they don't design for is safety. As a gun owner, I think it's time they did.

"Safety" and "gun" are not mutually exclusive terms. Something that does intentional harm should also be engineered not to do unintended harm. Yet, while the design of firearms has been extensively elaborated in recent decades for such harmful characteristics as rate of fire, the safety engineering of guns has scarcely changed since the time of Samuel Colt. In 1996, the most recent year for which statistics are available, 1,134 Americans died in firearm accidents, 135 of the dead being children. Most of these fatalities were caused by the lack of safety engineering. Just try to imagine any other product still being marketed unchanged if inherent design faults caused a thousand accidental deaths annually. Why shouldn't the same logic that has been used to require recent gains in the safety of cars also be applied to guns?

People who don't own a gun may not appreciate how ridiculous most firearms are from the standpoint of safety engineering. Only a small percentage of guns, for instance, have internal safeties that prevent them from firing if dropped. Internal safeties are cheap and reliable: one of the deadliest new weapons on the market, the Austrian-made Glock pistol, has this feature, which could easily be added to all guns. The manual safeties on the outside of most guns are often poorly labeled, confusing to operate, or hard to see—the safety on my Savage 69RXL twelve-gauge shotgun has its designations imprinted so deep into the metal you practically need a flashlight to tell whether it's on or not. (The weapon's owner's manual actually says, under a section titled "TEN COMMANDMENTS OF FIREARMS," "1. Don't rely on your gun's safety.") There's no requirement that guns even have manual safeties, and some do not.

Also unchanged since the nineteenth century is the fact that it often requires labored inspection to determine whether a gun is loaded. For revolvers, you must look closely along the axis of the barrel, which is not exactly the world's greatest idea if the gun *is* loaded. For most shotguns and for pistols whose magazines snap into the grip, there is no way to tell from appearances whether the weapon is ready to fire.

And, for most guns, it is nigh unto impossible to know whether a round is chambered. That fact is deceptively dangerous. Popular firearms such as the AR15 rifle or the Baretta 9mm handgun seem harmless if the clip has been removed, but a bullet may sit unnoticed in the chamber. Perhaps a quarter of annual gun-death accidents occur when people fail to realize a round is chambered in an "empty" gun. This mistake is amazingly easy to make: I'm a college graduate, and that didn't stop me from once accidentally discharging a handgun after snapping out the clip but forgetting to check the chamber. (Fortune smiled and I only killed a couch.)

The simple addition of a magazine safety prevents chambered-round accidents. But the majority of gun manufacturers haven't incorporated this device, though Smith & Wesson has begun embossing a cheerful warning disclaimer about chambered rounds on some pistols. Magazine safeties cost less than $2 each. Every gun for sale in the United States could have this feature for a total cost that for new guns works out to roughly $30,000 per life saved in chambered-round accidents—making the magazine safety extremely attractive from the standpoint of the eternal benefit-cost tradeoff.

THERE HAS BEEN some halting action in the direction of improved gun safety. A few manufacturers now include trigger locks with each gun sale; after Columbine, President Clinton proposed national legislation requiring trigger locks. Trigger locks would not have prevented Columbine High, but they might save hundreds of lives per year without one whit of firearm-freedom loss. Several handgun companies are experimenting with a fire-confirmation system that in theory would render pistols inoperative for anyone but their owners. (When shooting, owners would wear a ring that broadcasts a security code to the gun; the hitch is that kids or thieves might take the ring when taking the gun.) The Hi-Point carbine was conceived to appeal to gun fanciers, but at least its designer took the precaution of engineering the weapon so that it cannot physically accommodate the assault-style magazines that have no legitimate sporting or self-defense purpose. These are steps in the right direction.

But it's time to rethink gun engineering from the ground up, bringing firearms out of the antebellum era and into the technological age from the standpoint of the systems-engineering approach that has made so many other products safer. Trigger locks, for example, should not be add-ons that the buyer can simply discard. My cheap, reliable cell phone won't work unless I punch a four-digit code; why isn't my gun the same? (In an emergency, I'd rather fumble to punch a code than fumble to load.) Every gun should be designed so that it's completely obvious whether the weapon is loaded—

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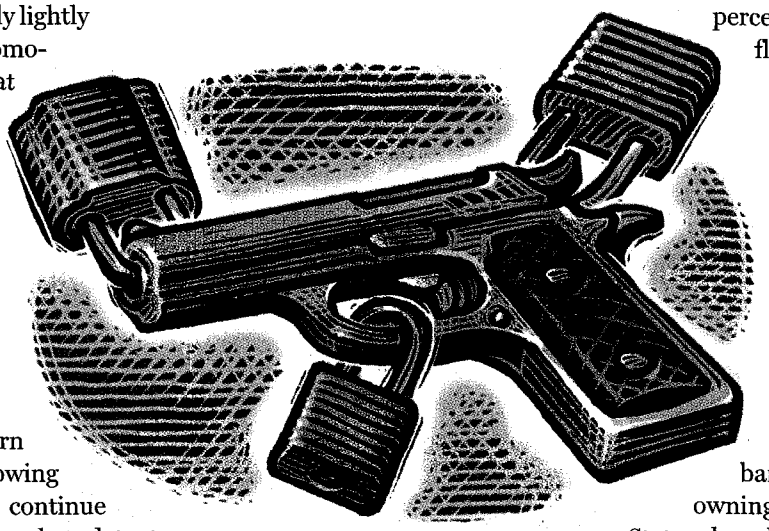
transparent magazines, say. Safeties should be standardized and color-coded for rapid reading. Some visible cue should make it obvious whether a gun has a chambered round. (In addition to reducing gun accidents, making it visually obvious whether a firearm is loaded or chambered would be a boon to police.) Internal and magazine safeties should be ubiquitous. Firing actions should be redesigned so that it's not physically possible to convert semiautomatic weapons into illegal full automatics. Ammunition systems should be redesigned so that they cannot be converted for assault-style clips designed to spray death in all directions.

Safe gun engineering has nothing to do with gun control. Today, government requires extensively detailed safety engineering for many products that are dangerous but only lightly controlled, such as automobiles, and for products that are completely uncontrolled, such as toys, furnaces, and baby strollers. It's preposterous to think that as a society America imposes rigorous safety-design standards on strollers but merrily exempts firearms from the benefits of modern safety engineering, allowing gun manufacturers to continue using design assumptions that date to Colt's tinker's shop.



BILL RUSSELL

Ideally, gun manufacturers would offer safer designs of their own accord. But marketing experience has shown that, although police departments, hunters, and sport shooters will buy gun-safety features, significant elements of the gun market probably won't—gun buyers who are criminals, for example, have as a class not shown themselves to be overly concerned with public safety. In pure textbook theory, we'd let gun buyers sort out their own safety choices and pay for the level of risk they accept. But gun buyers aren't making safety decisions solely for themselves; they impose their choices on the people they might accidentally shoot. Thus, public safety dictates a gun-safety regulatory standard.

Needless to say, the gun lobby will fight firearm redesign, but does NRA opposition have any meaning to anyone anymore, other than to the sold-out? For responsible political leaders, or responsible firearm owners, to contend they can't advocate safer guns because the gun nuts will howl is an indictment of the responsible, not of the nuts. Gun proponents constantly say they oppose controls but favor safety. Let's call them on this claim and demand a national initiative to reinvent the gun with safety in mind.

Would the right-to-bear-arms clause of the Constitution permit this idea? Because the preamble of the Second Amendment places gun ownership in the context of the raising of state militias—an anachronistic goal the NRA today methodically fudges—the Supreme Court has given states broad discretion in gun statutes. This means there is little doubt states could legislate firearm safety standards. Congress probably has the power to do so, too, though legal challenges are inevitable. The Second Amendment specifies a right to bear arms but also that firearms be "well-regulated," and, in this context, the Supreme Court has upheld national restrictions against the sawed-off shotgun and automatic weapons. Gun-safety engineering wouldn't stop individuals from owning weapons—it would require only that their weapons incorporate the best available safety features.

And, as an added bonus, if there were firearm-safety standards, many of the manufacturers stung by new design engineering costs would be foreign. As Tom Diaz points out in his new book, *Making a Killing: The Business of Guns in America*, a surprising percentage of the companies flooding U.S. gun shows and Kmarts with firearms are foreign-owned—Baretta being an Italian firm, Browning being Japanese-owned, Smith & Wesson being English, Germany's Heckler & Koch and Austria's Glock being leading U.S. gun suppliers, and the Chinese (who generally bar their own citizens from owning guns) selling in the United States about half the rifles imported here.

When European politicians prattle on in high dudgeon about the shocking American gun culture, they never pause to add that it is their own corporations busily exploiting and encouraging that culture; roughly half the guns sold in the United States are imported, mainly from Europe, with the firearm import sector growing much faster than domestic manufacture. It might be argued that European and Asian firms are dumping unsafe guns here—not only mass-marketing the types of weapons favored by criminals (such as North China Industries' SKS assault rifle, which is similar to the AK-47) but also shipping, by the millions, firearms that lack basic safety features. If the United States were exporting cars without seat belts to Italy, Germany, or China, those nations would be apoplectic. Why is it OK for their companies to ship to us firearms without magazine safeties?

It's possible that, if gun manufacturers begin to lose liability suits, they will adopt safety engineering for reasons of legal exposure. Generally, liability law allows products to be dangerous if they are *obviously* dangerous, in the way that cigarette lighters obviously cause open flame. Absurdly, gun makers' legal departments may fear that adding safety features will increase liability by reducing the obviousness of danger. But such problems as the lack of magazine safeties create firearm dangers that aren't obvious, more akin to the Pinto gas tank than the Bic lighter; considerations such as these may eventually lead to plaintiffs' victories in liability suits against gun manufacturers. Why endure another decade of avoidable gun-accident deaths as

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MARTIN MALIA

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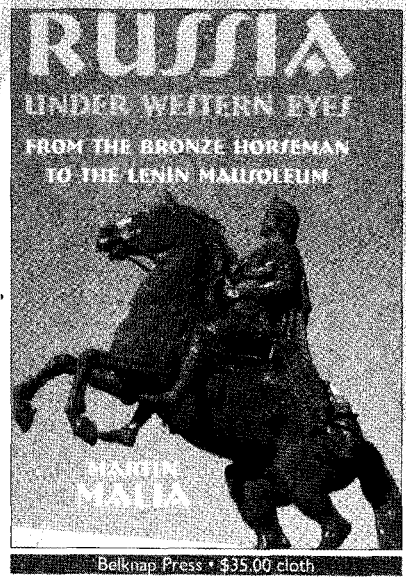

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the lawsuits mount rather than working for safe-gun engineering right now?

Safer guns would seem to be in the long-term interest of those who support the right of honest citizens to own firearms for hunting, self-defense, and sport shooting. And public support appears evident: polls show that 68 percent of Americans favor gun-safety regulation. But if Congress lacks the will or courage to take on the NRA, there is another way the national government could assume the lead.

Firearms aficionados pine for guns with the latest military features: folding stocks, banana clips, laser sights, black-carbon finish, flash suppressors, and so on. Suppose the Pentagon reengineered its guns with safety in mind. Defense Department contractors have both the technical know-how to accomplish breakthroughs in firearm design and the financial incentive that flows from the dollar volume of Pentagon purchasing. If the Defense Department made a commitment to safer guns, training accidents would decline, the technology of gun safety would be advanced—and safety might become cool and high-tech rather than square, because everything the military does with guns is copied by the gun culture. Something to think about, Secretary Cohen. ■

Republicans find a new friend in the CBO.

The Yes Man

By JONATHAN CHAIT

SAY WHAT YOU will about Dan Crippen, the new director of the Congressional Budget Office, but you always know exactly where he stands on the issues of the day. Since taking office in February, Crippen has shared his opinions on topics such as President Clinton's plan to pump funding into Medicare (it "would do nothing to address the underlying problem"), proposals to build up reserves for retirement programs (they "never seem to work"), and Senator John Breaux's Medicare overhaul ("clearly promising").

The trouble is that a man in Crippen's position is not supposed to prattle on like a panelist on "The McLaughlin Group." The Congressional Budget Office, created in 1974, represents a post-Watergate ideal of government informed and constrained by objective expertise—an outpost of dispassionate academic rigor in an atmosphere where such attributes are notably lacking. CBO directors traditionally bend over backward to avoid any hint of favoritism, and they usually have—by hiring staffers of different ideological stripes, carefully avoiding punditizing, and generally carrying on in the manner of a secular priesthood.

JONATHAN CHAIT is on leave from TNR as a fellow at the New America Foundation.

All this is necessitated by the Congressional Budget Office's immense authority. The office's budget forecasts establish the size of the projected budget surpluses, and its analyses determine whether a proposed bill would save the government money. In Washington, this is the power of life and death. The annual calculations of the CBO decide whether the politicians will pursue a path of austerity or profligacy. The CBO can snuff out an incipient political movement—as it did in 1994, when an adverse report from the CBO effectively doomed the Clinton health care plan. In return for this power, the CBO has always maintained a rigorous neutrality.

Naturally, this has not always made the CBO popular. Congressional overlords don't appreciate it when some pencil-necked academic informs them that their budget doesn't add up. But, in a way, that is exactly the point of the CBO. In Washington, numbers are political weapons—grotesque distortions of logic and mathematics, mass-produced by politicians and parties and lobbyists in order to put a patina of precision on their prevarications and ambiguities. The CBO, in short, has always been a nonpartisan scorekeeper in the political bloodsport of the capital. But now the rules of the game could be changing.

THE CBO'S HISTORIC STRENGTH is not that it always gets it right (it doesn't) but that all sides recognize it as valid and necessary. That is no longer true, though, and the change can be traced to a meeting at Andrews Air Force Base in 1990. That is where President Bush and congressional Democrats agreed to a deficit-reduction pact that raised taxes on upper-income Americans. Throughout the negotiations, Democrats insisted that the burden of the contemplated changes not fall mainly on the lower classes. So, following every twist and turn of the negotiations, the two sides beckoned the CBO to determine the distributive impact of every proposed tax hike or spending cut. To the horror of the conservatives, the CBO charts showed that the only way to reduce the deficit without hurting the poor was to raise taxes on the wealthy.

To the right-wingers, who regarded any analysis based on income differentials as hoary "class warfare," this made the CBO complicit in Bush's betrayal. Their dismay was compounded by new budget rules, which essentially held that Congress could not do anything that increased the deficit. Since it was the CBO that decided what did and did not increase the deficit, this placed it in the awkward position of appearing to foil Republican schemes to cut taxes.

Among conservative intellectuals, particularly the proponents of supply-side economics—the CBO became a bête noire, the subject of denunciation in *National Review*, *The Washington Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page. So fervently did supply-siders come to detest the CBO that they developed special epithets with which to express their grievances: "Keynesian" is one, an all-purpose insult that supply-siders hurl at moderates in general but apply with particular eagerness to the CBO. They also accused the CBO of practicing "static analysis"—their name for any econometric method that fails to account for the fantastical growth-creating powers of tax-cutting—and argued instead

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for "dynamic scoring," which holds that economic growth hinges almost entirely on top marginal tax rates.

Of course, neither accusation was true. Far from advocating Keynesian economics, the CBO has for years used a center-right economic model that assumes reducing the deficit boosts economic growth; this is the exact *opposite* of Keynesianism, which holds that deficit spending can be a tool for boosting growth. Furthermore, the CBO's "static analysis" actually does account for the macroeconomic benefits of tax cuts; it just doesn't assign them the supernatural power ascribed by the supply-side movement. But the supply-side conservatives were correct in understanding that the CBO fundamentally rejects their worldview—as a nonpartisan organization staffed by professional economists, it could not be any other way. And so, regarding the CBO as implacable and intellectually corrupt, the conservatives set out to usurp it.

THEY BELIEVED THEIR chance had finally arrived when the Republicans swept the 1994 elections. Those were heady days for the CBO-haters. Almost immediately, incoming House Speaker Newt Gingrich's spokesman, Tony Blankley, gleefully (and, it turned out, hollowly) threatened to fire the bulk of the CBO's professional staff. The GOP selected as the CBO's new director June O'Neill, a conservative economist from Baruch College best known for a paper—sponsored by the restaurant industry—estimating that the Clinton health care plan would destroy more than three million jobs.

Presuming the CBO was finally in the hands of a right-thinking economist, Republicans made a point of defending its honor. During the 1995 budget negotiations, the GOP leadership threatened to shut down the government unless the White House accepted the CBO's budget forecast instead of the White House's slightly more optimistic estimate, which would have required smaller spending cuts in order to balance the budget. Following the government shutdown, though, everything began to change. Rapid economic growth caused the budget deficit to melt away on its own. Meanwhile, Republicans, spurned by the voters because they had proposed large spending cuts, decided to turn their attention to the more pleasant task of reducing taxes.

At this point the CBO and its pessimistic forecasts became politically inconvenient. If you're trying to cut spending, you want a pessimistic budget forecast that shows a big deficit; after all, bigger deficits mean you need larger spending cuts to balance the budget. But, if you're trying to cut taxes, you want a small deficit projection—or, better yet, a surplus. And so the right once again began demanding that the CBO alter its forecasting methods and fire suspected "Keynesians." House Speaker Newt Gingrich declared that the office had to provide more optimistic predictions "or we get a new CBO."

But then an unexpected thing happened. O'Neill, presumably a loyal conservative, refused to replace the professional staff with ideologues or to cook the numbers. And so the GOP leadership rewarded her independence by informing her that her services would not be required for a second term and set out to find a more pliant successor.

When the Republican leadership tapped Crippen as O'Neill's successor, the supply-siders initially denounced him as a moderate. The evidence for this damning charge was that Crippen was not a formal member of their cabal, and, worse, he had once worked at the Reagan White House under moderate Chief of Staff Howard Baker, whose name represents treachery and appeasement in the universe of the right.

The howls of betrayal, oddly, cast Crippen in a favorable light—here was a compromise candidate, denounced by his own party's hard-liners—and this served to obscure more important, and troubling, facts about his background. While all previous CBO directors have been accomplished Ph.D. economists, Crippen has less relevant degrees in fiscal administration and public finance from Ohio State University.

Moreover, Crippen has spent his entire career in political circles, moving from the Reagan White House to a Washington lobbying firm. This raises questions about both Crippen's analytical rigor and his ability to attain the requisite detachment from the political world. Previous CBO directors had in mind that they would eventually return to a university or think tank, places that value intellectual integrity and merit. Perhaps this thought motivated O'Neill, who has since returned to academia. But, if Crippen wants to resume his work in the political realm after his tenure expires, he needs to preserve his political capital among congressional Republicans.

THUS FAR, CRIPPEN, who declined to be interviewed for this article, has done just that. After clumsily forcing out the incumbent deputy director, Crippen brought in a crew of likeminded executives to run the office and vet all the CBO's work. Before Crippen, the CBO would submit its reports to an ideologically diverse panel of outside subject-matter specialists—defense experts would examine its review of the military budget and so forth. Crippen has hired two staunchly conservative outside consultants to conduct all the reviews, even those that fall outside their area of expertise.

Subtle signs of partisanship have also appeared in Crippen's own work. In a preliminary assessment of Senator Phil Gramm's proposal to partially privatize Social Security, Crippen wrote, "It is a reasonable assumption to conclude that without a reform plan the surpluses will not be saved." Yet, in an analysis of President Clinton's Social Security plan, the CBO assumed the opposite—that the surpluses would add to the level of savings in the economy if not used to save Social Security. Why is this important? Because the CBO's underlying methodology assumes that higher savings help the economy. Comparing Gramm's plan with an alternative scenario under which there would be little added savings, while judging Clinton's against an alternative scenario of high savings, tilts the scales in favor of Gramm's plan.

Similarly, the summary to the CBO analysis of Clinton's most recent budget used double standards to make it appear that Clinton's budget would cut defense spending and increase domestic spending. It compared Clinton's proposed military budget with the previous year's actual defense spending, including unbudgeted emergency spending and an increase for inflation, while comparing his proposed domestic spending with a previous year's total that did not take into account emergency spending or inflation. This put

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the CBO's imprimatur on the Republican claim that Clinton was expanding social spending and starving the military.

Of course, the most important question is whether Crippen will bend to the conservatives' demand of instituting "dynamic scoring." Crippen wrote to one Democratic congressman that he planned to "review CBO's methods" of calculating the effect of taxing and spending on the economy. And, according to one Republican congressional staffer, "Dan has expressed interest in the past in dynamic scoring."

All this has badly shaken the CBO staff's morale, according to Hill staffers and former CBO personnel (current CBO staff members won't speak with the press). The office's professional economists see themselves as apolitical civil servants, and they have grown accustomed to blustery threats from angry congressmen on the left and the right that always come to nothing. This time, though, the threat may come from their own director, and the staff has fallen into a deep depression, some even telling friends and outside contacts that there might be mass departures. Whether that literally comes to pass or not, apparently these staff members believe that, by suggesting that the CBO is about to lose its nonpartisan professionals, they can give Crippen and the Republicans pause. But what if an emasculated CBO is exactly what the conservatives want? ■

The small stakes in the big census fight.

Sampling Error

By PETER SKERRY

THE LATEST INSTALLMENT in the continuing drama over the 2000 census is about to unfold. As of June 15, current appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State will expire unless Congress and the Clinton administration agree on what to do about the persistent undercounts of minorities in the census. Democrats continue to insist upon statistical sampling to adjust the count; Republicans continue to reject such remedies categorically. Unless there is some compromise, we could be facing another government shutdown. And so, after two decades, this tedious but deeply divisive technical argument may finally be bringing the government to its knees. Along the way, it could threaten the integrity of one of the oldest and most basic governmental functions.

It would be one thing if this were a battle of great significance. But the dirty little secret about the census fight is that the stakes are actually paltry. Advocates of census adjustment talk as if changing the way the U.S. government counts its population is the next great crusade on behalf of the disadvantaged—one that will expand the electoral power of minorities and send them substantially more federal funds. But adjusting the census will accomplish neither goal. Indeed, the fact that it has assumed such importance is testimony primarily to the limitations of contemporary politics: rather than confront the genuine social and political problems of the disadvantaged, our elected officials have come to rely on administrative mechanisms to tweak outcomes at the margin.

PETER SKERRY, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, teaches political science at Claremont McKenna College.

LET'S BE CLEAR: there is a census undercount. According to its own estimates, the Census Bureau missed 1.6 percent of the U.S. population in 1990. By all accounts, this figure was worse than in 1980 though better than undercounts prior to that year. Let's also admit that there is, indeed, a "differential racial undercount," just as critics say. In 1990, 4.4 percent of blacks were uncounted, 4.5 percent of American Indians, and 5.0 percent of Hispanics, compared with only 0.7 percent of non-Hispanic whites. Moreover, this gap has widened over the past 50 years.

But these numbers need to be put in context. First, such census data are not very reliable. The bureau's own studies show that, when asked to identify themselves ethnically or racially, people frequently give different answers at different times. For example, among those identifying themselves as "black" in the 1990 census, only 96.2 percent so identified on a subsequent survey. For Hispanics, the figure was 92.3 percent; for Asian/Pacific Islanders, 91.9 percent; and for American Indians, 65.1 percent. Such numbers indicate a limit to the accuracy we can realistically expect of census data.

As for the fiscal and political implications of the undercount, they are grossly overstated. Journalists are fond of repeating that $59 billion in federal funds is distributed annually on the basis of formulas that rely on census data. Yet, according to research sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, only $190 million of that total (0.32 percent) would have been shifted as a result of adjusting the 1990 census.

How can this be? First, population is only one of several factors in federal grant formulas. Indeed, programs designed to help distressed communities often reduce funding when population increases. Second, to the extent that population gains do lead to grant increases, the critical factor for a given jurisdiction is not merely its absolute gain but its gain relative to other jurisdictions. Many jurisdictions could register population increases from adjustment but end up worse off than they would have been without adjustment, because other jurisdictions would experience even greater increases. Third, because such grant programs typically have funding ceilings, adjustment would result in a fixed pie divided up among more people. Per capita grants would actually decrease.

Similarly exaggerated has been the importance of the undercount when it comes to drawing legislative districts. The fact is, the partisan consequences of adjustment are impossible to predict. All participants in the debate assume that adjustment would advantage Democrats and disadvantage Republicans, on the theory that currently undercounted minorities are more likely to be Democrats. But the drawing

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of district lines in 50 different states is subject to myriad local political factors; quite aside from the demographic vagaries, nobody knows how each of these political scenarios would play out under adjustment. And weakened partisan loyalties would make the process less an exact science than ever.

As Tom Hofeller, current staff director of the House Subcommittee on the Census, put it in 1989: "The gerrymander overcometh all. What demographics give, legislatures can take away in the dead of the night." Remember, during the 1990 redistricting, Democrats controlled both legislative chambers and the executive mansions of 19 states; Republicans, only three. Today the situation is somewhat reversed: Republicans dominate 14 states, Democrats eleven. In the states under their control, Republicans need not be threatened by the additional minorities resulting from adjustment. After all, these minorities could be packed into "majority minority" districts—a tactic that has helped both minorities and Republicans in the past, at the expense of nonminority Democrats. Republicans might also mitigate the impact of additional minorities by dispersing them among several districts.

Such uncertainty might not assuage the fears of House Republicans holding on to a slim majority. But this does not mean adjustment would benefit Democrats.

So WHY ALL the fuss? To begin with, the Census Bureau is an easy target. The census is a classic public good: with no well-organized constituencies to defend it, the bureau is vulnerable to all comers. It has certainly been an easy target for minorities—easier than the Bureau of Labor Statistics, whose flawed unemployment data is arguably more critical to minority interests than census undercounts. But the BLS has strong defenders, both inside and outside Congress. The Census Bureau, on the other hand, has faced lawsuits from cities as different as Los Angeles and Detroit. And, even though the cities' claims of injury from the undercount don't hold up to scrutiny—again, given that the likely impact of adjustment would be small anyway—their beleaguered mayors persist because adjustment allows them to seem responsive to both local boosters and to minorities.

Minority complaints about the undercount are more than opportunism, though. No one wants to be excluded from what has been called "a national ceremony"—perhaps one of the few left. The census has symbolic clout for black Americans, who intuitively trace the undercount back to the Constitution's original stipulation that slaves be counted as three-fifths of a person. Hence Al Sharpton's taunt at a recent demonstration: "You in the media, we know you count us as three-fifths of a man anyway."

Advocates of adjustment also make rights claims. As New York Senator Charles Schumer has argued: "The Constitution, of course, guarantees the right of every person residing in the United States to be counted." Going one step further, advocates claim that voting rights are at stake in the census fight. To be uncounted in the census, they argue, is tantamount to being disenfranchised.

But think about it for a second. There is no "right to be counted." Quite the opposite: There is, in fact, a legal obligation to cooperate with the census. Yet here we come to one of the more disturbing results of adjustment: Legally obligated or not, why would any of us go to the trouble of filling out census forms if, through adjustment, the government offered to do it for us? Mindful that fewer Americans actually mail back their census forms each decade, experts fear that adjustment could lead to "participation meltdown." And they are right to worry.

Even more troubling is the notion that not being counted is tantamount to being disenfranchised. If individuals go uncounted, they will obviously not be included in the one-person-one-vote calculations by which district lines are drawn. Yet uncounted individuals are in no way prevented from voting—or from organizing others to vote. Conversely, those who are counted but do not vote are not enfranchised in any meaningful sense.

The case for adjustment rests on a curious notion of political power, one that reduces political muscle to sheer numbers. Obviously, numbers are important. But even more important is what people do with those numbers. In essence, adjustment advocates argue that population totals ought to translate into power independently of political effort. In an era of concern about excessively thin notions of civic obligation, this is a strikingly anemic notion of citizenship.

The debate over adjustment is less about "empowerment" than it is about the logic of the contemporary administrative state. Adjustment is the kind of administrative quick fix that our political elites would prefer to squabble over than to debate how—or whether—disadvantaged minorities can build genuine political power.

BOTH PARTIES ARE complicitous here. Republicans are loath to seem opposed to minority empowerment and rights, especially voting rights. So their counterarguments focus on statistical and legal technicalities, particularly the constitutional requirement of an "actual enumeration." As for Democrats, they've focused on the undercount because it's one issue for which they believe they have a simple remedy. Compared with other demands that minorities make—for affirmative action, increased minimum wages, greater educational expenditures—census adjustment is relatively costless. Like redistricting, adjustment is a highly technical issue not likely to arouse much opposition among the general public. And whatever costs it might generate can be postponed for a few years, perhaps indefinitely.

Unfortunately, the particular palliative of census adjustment is a cure worse than the disease. The only group that adjustment would truly empower would be the demographers and statisticians directly involved with it. And, having sat through many sessions at the Census Bureau where these knowledgeable professionals have confused one another on the subject, I have little confidence that they would be able to explain it to the rest of us—let alone make sure it actually works. Surely there are better ways to help the disadvantaged than this. Then again, they'd probably take a lot more energy—and serious thought—than simply shutting down the government. ■

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The Palestinians try to undo their historical mistakes.

Israel Irreversible

By MARTIN PERETZ

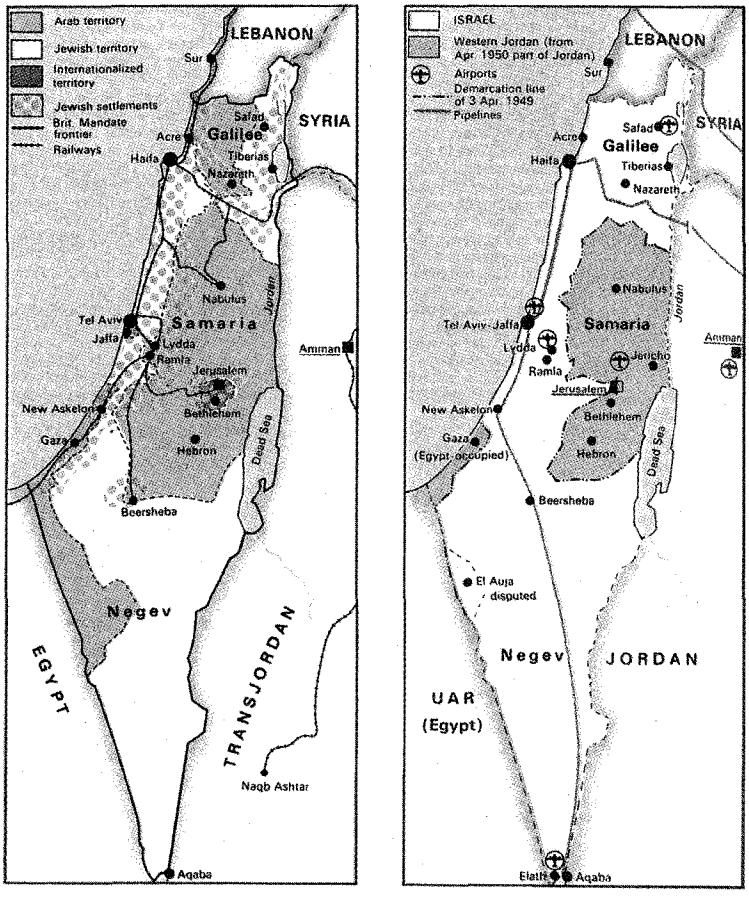
A DELIRIUM IS flaring through the Arab world, and it is a delirium about U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181. It is very rare these days that any action of the General Assembly garners attention; it is even rarer that something that passed almost 52 years ago could cause a fuss. But, after half a century of trashing the U.N. Partition Plan for Palestine, which is what Resolution 181 recommended, the Arabs have suddenly discovered its virtues. Early last month, for example, Amr Moussa, the foreign minister of Egypt, called on Israel and the "state of Palestine" to partition the land once held under the British Mandate. In this, Egypt echoes the Palestinians themselves. The speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Ahmed Qurei, has already proclaimed unproclaimed Palestine's borders. They are "internationally recognized borders set in [the] partition resolution." In a letter to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Palestinian Authority's observer at the U.N., Nasser al-Kidwa, calls for "implementing the resolutions of the General Assembly of 29 November 1947." This would be hilarious, if it wasn't so outrageous. At the very moment that the Israelis are tearing themselves apart over the magnitude of the territorial compromise that they must make for peace, the Palestinians are demonstrating yet again the bizarre and delusional nature of their politics.

This long backward look at 1947 is now official Palestinian policy, enunciated by Yasir Arafat himself, and even by his more moderate consiglieri. The Palestinians have even managed to edge a few mischievous European states into taking this old map of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean, against which the Arabs themselves waged no fewer than three (losing) wars, as the reference point for the cartography of peace. Of course, one reason that countries like Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal, congenitally pro-Arab in any case, now have renewed nostalgia for the Partition Plan is that it did more than recommend a particular division of Palestine. It also contrived to make Jerusalem a *corpus separatum* under international authority. (On the model of the Free City of Danzig?) In this respect, the Europeans are serving an ecclesiastical design. For this notion of Jerusalem's future has always appealed most forcefully to the Holy See, and, even now, when it has no chance of getting it, the Vatican is eager for a sovereign stake in Jerusalem not altogether unlike its stake in Rome. Greece has its own parallel Orthodox Christian reasons for taking a similar position.

Not having pressing internal reasons of their own to disagree, the northern Europeans go along with the antique formula. It was none other than the German foreign minister who, representing the chair of the European Union, wrote the Foreign Ministry of Israel announcing Europe's fidelity to the idea of the internationalization of the city, as if the internationalization of anything has worked in our time. It was the U.N. Human Rights Commission, headed by former President of Ireland Mary Robinson, that, in its annual ritual (and highly selective) condemnation of Israel, referred not to the usual standards of the Oslo agreement or Resolution 242 of 1967 but to the quite literally antediluvian artifact of Resolution 181. And, in South Africa, President Nelson Mandela himself has met with Arafat to discuss ways in which the U.N. General Assembly, through its nearly defunct Trusteeship Council, could help the Palestinians put international law on the side of their claim to statehood.

Some history is in order. On November 29, 1947, the General Assembly accepted, with minor changes in detail, the recommendations of the U.N. Special Commission on Palestine that

Maps of a missed opportunity.



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the land west of the Jordan be partitioned into "a Jewish state" and "an Arab state," with a special status for Jerusalem outside the two polities. As the Arabs vehemently argued then, the Partition Plan resolution did not come from the Security Council and therefore lacked the force of international law. The Jews, by contrast, saw an opportunity to achieve at least some sovereignty and security for the Yishuv, and they wisely took Resolution 181 as the moral sanction that it was for the achievement of the Zionist idea.

THE PARTITION OF 1947 was, in fact, the second partition of Palestine. The first had been effected 26 years prior. The territory initially envisioned for the Jewish National Home by both the Allied Supreme Council of the Paris Peace Conference and the government of Great Britain, to which was awarded the Mandate for Palestine, straddled both sides of the Jordan. But, in 1921, Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill almost surgically excised the east bank out of Palestine in order to create Transjordan as a consolation prize for the Hashemites, who had lost the Arabian desert to the House of Saud. (Over the long haul, this has turned out to be fortuitous surgery for the Zionists: the Hashemites have proven to be relatively moderate neighbors.) Do not be shocked. Other states were being carved out of the Ottoman Empire in similar fashion, in the last creative acts of imperialism. This is how Iraq was born, and Syria, too. The lopping off of the most fertile areas of Palestine was a bitter pill for the Zionists, and it incurred the bitterness of many in the movement's leadership, including someone as statesmanlike as Louis D. Brandeis.

Still, the Zionist Executive acceded to the surgery and to other draconian restrictions prescribed at the same time for the west side of the river. As the historian Howard M. Sachar points out, however, the League of Nations and the British mandatory power remained committed to "the Zionist redemptive effort." In the document confirming Great Britain's role in Palestine, the League assumed that an embryonic Jewish state was in the making. "The word 'Arab' did not once appear.... The Arabs and other nations in Palestine were repeatedly described as merely 'non-Jews.'"

But partition was not to disappear from the lexicon of the Mandate. In 1937, a Royal Commission broached the proposal that there be a further partition of what was left of Palestine. Even though it allocated to a Jewish state only ten percent of the map of Palestine as drawn in 1919 and just 20 percent of western Eretz Israel, the Arabs rejected it. But the mainstream Zionists had come to accept the commission's terms precisely because of that Jewish state, and this especially in light of the ever more perilous situation faced by Europe's Jews.

In the end, however, Britain, not willing to buck the Arabs, withdrew the commission's proposals. After all, instigated by Haj Amin Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, Arabs were in revolt and riot all over the country, and both British soldiers and Jews were being killed. Ultimately, the insurrection fizzled out. But, two years later, at the St. James's Palace conference, where Palestinian Arabs would not sit in the same room as Palestinian Jews, it became evident that His Majesty's government was pursuing a policy of appeasement toward the Arabs. While the conference was actually still in session, a frightful portent invaded the confident world of the appeasers. The Mufti's friend, Adolf Hitler, invaded Prague. The British responded, so to speak, by issuing their notorious 1939 White Paper shutting the gates of Palestine to the Jews about to be locked up in ghettos and death camps.

Partition remained the only feasible solution for Palestine, and it surfaced again after World War II. Inevitably, any new partition scheme would be more favorable to the Jews than the one proposed ten years earlier, because the Yishuv itself was far larger than it had been. Tens of thousands of Jews had run the blockade to Palestine and, even if the Nazis in the interim had not killed millions of others who might otherwise have immigrated, there were legions that needed to come immediately. As it happened, moreover, and despite the British abandonment of Zionism during the late '30s and early '40s, Palestinian Jewry was already a strong and substantially self-governing polity, increasingly competent in matters of defense.

ACCORDING TO RESOLUTION 181, the Jewish state to be carved out of Mandate Palestine was composed of three noncontiguous segments and was smaller than the cartography proposed by the U.N.'s own study commission. (It was also less than half the territory reserved by the League for the Jews after the separation of Transjordan.) More to the point, it left out virtually the entire western Galilee up to the Lebanese border and parts of the almost wholly unpopulated Negev desert. The map was grotesque from almost every practical standpoint, the very image of a begrudged and unworkable polity. For almost all Zionists, it represented an ideological defeat and a pragmatic burden. But hundreds of thousands of "remnant" Jews were still legally stateless, and many of these either lived in displaced persons' camps in Europe or were imprisoned by the British in Cyprus, and the misery of the Jews was deemed a more pressing matter than their ideological purity.

It is useful to recall the particular nomenclature in the Partition Plan for the companion polity to the Jewish state. Everywhere it was called an "Arab state," and that is because no one at the time—certainly not the Arabs of Palestine—imagined the establishment of a truly Palestinian state, least of all a democratic one. In any case, the Palestinian Arabs did not come forward in 1947 to claim their distinctive patrimony.

There are at least two reasons for this. One is that the population was not at all clear about what that patrimony entailed or meant. It was one thing to resent the Jews; it was altogether a different thing to have concrete political aspirations. The second reason is that the Palestinians had long ago ceded their fate to the neighboring Arab governments, some to Syria, some to Egypt, the rest to Jordan. To be sure, untrained and more than slightly wild indigenous Arab gangs, mainly extremists associated with the Mufti, waged primitive warfare almost without reference to strategic considerations. But it was the Arab states that did most of the talking and their armies that did most of the fighting. The

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1949 armistice agreements ending the war between Israel and the invading armies were negotiated between Israel and the governments that had dispatched those armies. The operative fact was that Great Britain wanted Jordan to be its legatee in Palestine, and, since the Jordanian Arab Legion at the end controlled almost all of the territory not lost to the Israelis, the kingdom was simply able to annex that territory, Gaza excepted, to itself. Remember that this territory included East Jerusalem and the Old City with its ancient Jewish Quarter.

Local Palestinians did not protest Jordan's annexation of these areas; nor did international authorities, though only Pakistan recognized it entirely. During the 18 years from 1949 to 1967, during which Jordan governed the non-Israeli part of Palestine, no one asked: Where is the "Arab state" intended by the Partition Plan? Jordan was that Arab state.

BUT IT DID NOT occupy all of the territory allocated to that state, because the Arabs lost that territory in the war they had started. After the Six Day War in 1967, when the same armies that were defeated in 1948–49 were defeated again, the Arab world, dazed by the collapse of pan-Arabist expectations, went into a long mourning period of denial. "No recognition of Israel, no negotiations, no peace," as the Arab League so gracefully put it at Khartoum shortly after the war. Here is what the war's instigator, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, had to say on the matter: "We lost the battle in 1967 without coming face-to-face with the enemy. We lost the war without entering it.... Since we did not have the opportunity to enter the war, we cannot say that we lost."

Yet Egypt had agreed to Security Council Resolution 242, which called upon Israel to withdraw from "territories occupied in the recent conflict" (after lengthy Security Council haggling, the words "the" or "all" were intentionally omitted before "territories"), and even this was tied to a broad agreement on the sovereignty and independence of every state in the area—which meant Israel, since it was the only state whose very existence was routinely questioned.

This resolution was not the final word of the Arabs. They continued to deny the right of Israel to exist at all. The PLO charter with its denials of Jewish nationhood, only recently canceled, remained in force. But, before the world, Arab states, at least, had grudgingly forfeited the formal demand that Israel withdraw to the 1949 armistice lines which were the frontiers still in effect in 1967. Of course, the Arabs caviled even over the idea of small changes in those lines. Still, they seemed to understand that there would be no return to the 1967 borders. On the other hand, 1967 was the reference point.

With Israel having returned the entire Sinai to Egypt at Camp David in 1978, the question became: What would Israel give up on the Golan and in the West Bank? I don't know what the prospects are with Syria. But no plausible Israeli government, neither one led by Benjamin Netanyahu nor one headed by Ehud Barak, would surrender more than, say, 60 percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians. There must be a price for starting and losing three wars in a quarter-century. Perhaps more important: If a small country like Israel wants to safeguard its security, it must hold the geographical approaches that make it vulnerable. And this is the roughly 40 percent of the West Bank, all of it uninhabited, that Israel dares not relinquish. As the current war in the former Yugoslavia shows yet again, control of the air is no substitute for actually holding ground.

The U.S. peace team, the same people exhausted from repeating the same tired formulas for almost a decade, has perpetuated the agony by not telling the Palestinian Arabs the truth. They will not go nonstop from Hebron to Jenin; they will not camp on the river Jordan; it will be not them but the Israelis who watch from the high hills and ranges; they will not have the real Jerusalem—as opposed to a few acres outside it—as their capital. Yes, it might have been otherwise had the Arabs acknowledged—in 1919, or in 1937, or in 1947, or even in 1967—that they must share western Palestine with Israel. But they didn't. Indeed, for the past 50 years, the missed golden opportunity of Resolution 181 has inwardly haunted and taunted the Palestinians. Time marches on.

Fifty years of time, actually. But the Palestinians, who came so late in history to crystallize their own ambitions, now want to abolish time as a way of abolishing their own mistakes and to pretend that the maps are still being newly drawn and that generations of Israelis have not built lives in those areas which Yasir Arafat has now reverted to claiming as his own. Yes, some of these are places where Arabs once lived and which they left. It makes no sense now to deny that, during Israel's war for independence, Arabs were pushed out, and not always so gently. On the other hand, many of them, most of them, abandoned their homes at the call of the haughty elites who assured them that they would return in triumph. In any case, Israel has also built a modern society in the empty spaces of old and dusty Palestine, and it is a sign of its both sullen and intoxicating attachment to the past that the Palestinian leadership should tell its crowds that this, too, is still up for grabs.

AND THESE PALESTINIANS, what and whom do they echo? They echo the silence of the United States. In response to these provocations, President Clinton's press secretary issued what can only be called an extremely perfunctory reproach: "The United States calls upon both parties to continue to adhere to the terms of reference of the peace process as defined in Madrid and Oslo. The objective of the negotiating process is the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338," the latter being an extension of the former passed after the Yom Kippur War in 1973. In contrast to the administration's public and quasi-public tantrums against the Israeli government over other issues, this is not even a slap on the wrist. It is, moreover, just one statement. Count on it: the Palestinians know how to gauge the attitudes of the United States, and they have neither seen nor heard anything from Washington to deflect them from their new campaign. Don't the American peace processors understand that Israelis, whether left or right, dovish or hard-line, will see this Palestinian revival of the maps of 1947 as another sign of uncompromising irredentism? And who can say that they are wrong? ■

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Wes Clark wages a two-front war.

Courage Under Fire

By JACOB HEILBRUNN

GENERAL WESLEY CLARK, NATO's supreme allied commander, is one of the few American military officers who really knows Slobodan Milosevic. In fact, he's been dealing with the Serbian leadership longer than almost anyone else in the Army or the Clinton administration. As a result, explains a State Department official, "Wes is someone who really understands the Serbs' evil." And, in his initial briefings on Operation Allied Force, Clark made that understanding abundantly clear. "President Milosevic and his military leaders should understand that there is no sanctuary for them," Clark declared to reporters in Brussels on March 25, right after the first night of bombing. Yet, as the air war drags on, Clark himself might need sanctuary—from his many detractors within the U.S. military.

Almost as soon as the bombs started falling on Belgrade, harsh—and usually unattributed—words began to seep out of the Pentagon and other redoubts of the U.S. military, and the sniping has only increased in recent weeks. Clark is "elitist and aloof," a colonel who worked for him told me. "Frankly, he's more Westmoreland—handsome, attuned to political considerations—than Schwarzkopf," says a retired general. Not surprisingly, conservatives in the press have chimed in. Robert Novak derided Clark, who grew up in Little Rock and won a Rhodes Scholarship, as "the perfect model of a 1990s political four-star general"—someone who earned his stars by being a Clinton crony. David Hackworth, the retired colonel turned pundit, went even further, dubbing Clark the "ultimate perfumed prince." Hackworth's insult, according to a retired Army officer, "has shot around the military."

Take these critical words with a grain of salt. Sure, the air campaign over Yugoslavia has, to this point, been a failure, which means Clark, as the campaign's commanding officer, must take his share of the blame. But is Clark really a new Westmoreland? Or is he something else—a casualty of the military's antipathy toward intervening in foreign conflicts at the behest of a civilian leader it doesn't particularly like or respect or even trust?

Part of the disdain for Clark among many military types comes down to plain jealousy. As an all-American swimmer who graduated first in his class from West Point in 1966, Clark has always been an object of envy. "The Army, like the church, has a hierarchy of seven layers," says retired Lieutenant General Theodore G. Stroup Jr., who attended West Point with Clark. "Some guys move up to be a bishop faster than others. Clark moved very fast." After serving in Vietnam, where he was wounded while leading a heroic assault on a North Vietnamese encampment, Clark came home to plum assignments: first a 1975–76 White House fellowship in the Office of Management and Budget, then a stint on the staff of Alexander Haig, at NATO, before joining the elite office of the chief of staff of the Army in 1983. He earned his third star in 1994 with a promotion to director of strategy for the Joint Staff, and his fourth came as commander of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama from 1996–97.

ROB BARBONI

Along the way, Clark's cerebral approach did not endear him to the Army brass or foot soldiers. "He's not the kind of guy that inspires a willingness to get yourself killed on principle," says one officer. An order from Clark, the officer adds, "is just an order." Clark also weakened his standing in the Army when he accepted the appointment with the Joint Chiefs. Since his joint position required him to work in tandem with all four branches rather than representing the Army's interests alone, resentment of him within the Army only intensified. John Hillen, a retired Army captain and currently a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, admires Clark but admits that many in the Army

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don't; in their minds, he says, Clark is "outside the system."

But petty jealousy and personality conflicts alone cannot account for Clark's difficulties. Clark is mainly reviled by those who believe that, in leading the current Kosovo campaign, he has strayed from the "Powell Doctrine," which holds that, if and when the United States fights, it should apply overwhelming force suddenly and swiftly. Ironically, Clark—like many officers shaped by the Vietnam experience—subscribed to this doctrine long before it bore Powell's name. As an Army captain in 1975, he wrote an Army Command and General Staff College thesis (excerpted in the April 26 *Time* magazine) arguing that "once committed to actual combat, anything less than overwhelming and rapid military success for the intervening power will be diplomatically disastrous." Later, as commanding general at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, California, Clark trained troops in the techniques of breaching trench defenses that would help win the Gulf war. "Wes Clark's military enjoyed a great renaissance," says Boston University's Andrew Bacevich, himself a former Army colonel (and TNR contributor). "If you wanted to see that renaissance, Fort Irwin was the place to go.... That renaissance was guided by the absolute determination of officers never to let Vietnam happen again."

BUT CLARK'S EXPERIENCE in the Balkans shook him up. Clark learned that the Powell Doctrine, while sound in theory, could be a cover for inaction—armor-plated isolationism. With his appointment to the Joint Chiefs as the strategy officer, Clark was fated to be involved in the Balkan mess. At first, things didn't go so well. In 1994, for instance, Clark infamously exchanged gifts with Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic, who was later indicted for war crimes. Clark handed Mladic his hat; Mladic gave him his—plus a bottle of plum brandy and a handgun with a Cyrillic inscription.

But Clark eventually found his footing. He worked closely with Richard Holbrooke, then assistant secretary of state for Europe and the Clinton administration's point man for the Balkans. The bond between the two men was forged on August 19, 1995, when they were traveling over Mount Igman, a famously dangerous road to Sarajevo. A French armored personnel carrier, which was transporting several of their colleagues and traveling behind them, plunged down the mountainside. Clark bravely rappelled down the mined area only to discover that three of his colleagues had perished. "He and I were bonded from that moment," says Holbrooke. "Clark is Mount Igman. He is a can-do general."

Indeed, Clark was a key ally to Holbrooke—one of the few military officers who supported his relentless efforts to deal forcefully with the Serbs and end the war in Bosnia. Clark was instrumental in arranging for the August and September 1995 air strikes against the marauding Bosnian Serbs. And, according to Holbrooke's memoir *To End a War*, Clark clashed with his superior in rank, the crusty Admiral Leighton Smith, when Smith sought to extend a brief bombing pause. Holbrooke recalls Clark sat in an American Embassy car on the Cologne airfield, while Smith yelled at Clark on the telephone for disagreeing with him. General John Shalikashvili, then head of the Joint Chiefs, went so far as to tell Holbrooke that the Army could remove Clark. But Holbrooke stood by the general. In the end, Shalikashvili made sure Clark got his fourth star.

At the Dayton negotiations in November 1995, Clark dismayed his fellow military officers by arguing for a strong civilian presence along with the multinational peacekeeping force in Bosnia, and he advocated a robust police force that would have authority to make arrests. Clark also persuaded Milosevic—with the help of a classified imaging system called PowerScene that created a video-game-like three-dimensional map of Bosnia—to allow for a substantial corridor between Sarajevo and Gorazde.

TODAY, CLARK IS experiencing numerous frustrations. Certainly, in his public statements, he has shown a willingness to wage war against the Serbs. But a number of those statements have been contradicted by NATO officials—sometimes in the span of minutes. Asked on CNN on the third day of the campaign whether he would bomb Serbian troops, Clark responded, "We will do this." But, just an hour later, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea demurred, "We are not going to systematically target troops." Then there was Clark's contention that "we are going to systematically and progressively attack, disrupt, degrade, and devastate and ultimately ... destroy these forces and their facilities and support." A NATO official told *The Washington Times* Clark's statement was "a slip of the tongue" and added, "No one's going to destroy the armed forces" of Serbia.

Even worse, Clark doesn't appear to be getting the tactical support he needs. Clark wanted Apache helicopters at the beginning of the campaign; the Apaches didn't arrive for four weeks—and they still haven't seen battle. Given Clark's eagerness to take on the Serbs, it's hard to believe that he wouldn't put ground troops in if he could.

Some in the military liken Clark's predicament to the one generals faced during Vietnam. In his recent book *Dereliction of Duty*—which has achieved a cult following among many junior officers—fast-rising officer H.R. McMaster portrays the Vietnam-era generals as a cowardly lot who chose to execute incompetent civilian orders rather than resign in protest. Indeed, the only thing that might endear Clark to his critics at this point would be his resignation.

Fortunately, Clark is not about to throw his stars on the table in a fit of pique. That would amount to ratifying a steady and dangerous trend in civilian-military relations over the past decade—namely, the loss of civilian control. It is true that Clark is taking orders from a civilian leadership—both in the United States and in Europe—that remains maddeningly equivocal. But it is just as relevant that Clark is contending with an increasingly independent military brass whose obsession with avoiding another Vietnam has helped trap the Clinton administration into avoiding ground troops, thereby rendering defeat more likely. Clark's impressive record suggests that, given the right tools, he is one of the few military leaders—or perhaps the only one—who could make a go of it in the Balkans. And yet, for all the talk of Clark being Clinton's pet, the irony is that Clinton's own inept strategy may end up delivering Clark into the hands of his Pentagon enemies. ■

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Scenes from a war gone wrong.

Lost Kosovo

By DAVID RIEFF

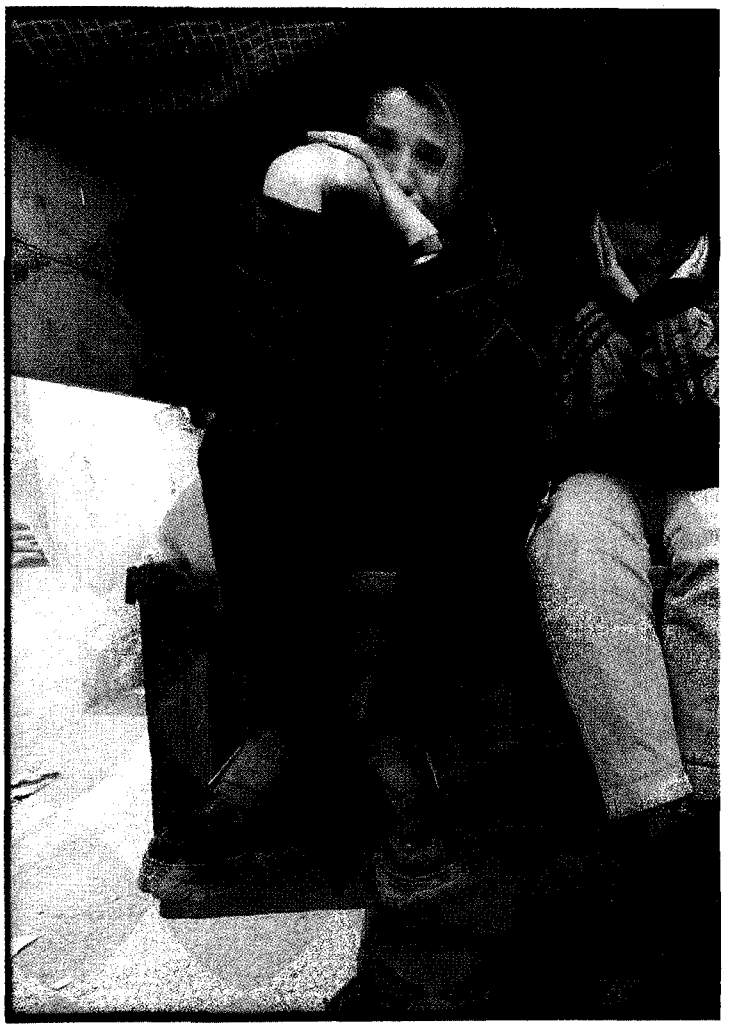
DURING THE FIRST three weeks of Operation Allied Force, the skies over Albania were effectively closed to civilian air traffic. The Albanian government had seen in the Kosovo crisis both an obvious danger and an obvious benefit. The danger was that half a million Kosovar refugees were flooding into the country. The benefit was that, in the course of coping with that flow, the great powers finally would have to help rebuild Albania. And so, even before Brussels had made a formal request, the government announced that it was turning over its ports and airspace to NATO. Given that Rinas Airport in Tirana, the capital, functioned only in daylight, and the main port, Durres, bore a stronger resemblance to Tunis when it was controlled by the Barbary pirates than to Rotterdam or even Piraeus, this was, to put it mildly, a gift with strings attached. It also made my getting into Albania rather complicated.

Theoretically, it was possible to take a flight from Rome aboard a start-up carrier called Alb Air; but fellow journalists told me the availability of seats aboard the old Russian plane was always in doubt until the last minute. That left the port of Bari on Italy's Adriatic coast. There one could get a ferry, the *SS Palladio,* to Durres.

While getting a berth was no problem, the boarding process was Dante-esque. First, some 1,000 other passengers and I were crammed together in the small departure hall of the port for more than four hours after the ship had been due to sail. We were then made to inch our way onboard through its bowels more slowly than I had ever imagined possible. The reason for the delay became clear when I reached the main deck. A solitary Albanian customs agent was checking the documents of each traveler, one by one by one.

It soon became apparent that, in addition to transporting aid workers, Albanian families returning home, and foreign journalists, the *SS Palladio* was, for all intents and purposes, a Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) troopship. The volunteers, mostly young men from the Kosovar diaspora, came from as far away as the Bronx and Toronto and from as near as southern Italy. They boarded last, slept on the deck, and, the following morning, as the *Palladio* entered Albanian waters, were mustered by their officers for a political lecture before disembarking.

At quayside, they lined up once again in their Swiss Army surplus forest camouflage uniforms, young men still playing at being soldiers. "KLA!" they roared in unison, brandishing their fists. Drivers for the International Committee of the Red Cross, who had been stuck in the port for a day, looked down curiously from their cabs. Then the volunteers boarded buses and roared off toward their training camps.



"No more talk," a volunteer from Toronto, who the night before had told me that his father owned a pizzeria, called out exuberantly as he passed. To which a middle-aged Albanian, his pretty five-year-old granddaughter in one arm and a boxed toaster oven in the other, muttered in surprisingly good English: "Cannon fodder. The Serbs will cut them to pieces."

But the posturing of the volunteers, who, as I would later learn, were arriving on every ferry from Italy, was a sideshow. The real action in the port that day, as it was every day, was the aid effort. White vehicles were everywhere. They bore the logos familiar to anyone who has been in Bosnia, Rwanda, Liberia, or any of the other recent sites of humanitarian catastrophe—Caritas, Doctors Without Borders, Doctors of the World, Oxfam, and Catholic Relief Services, to name only a few. As Pete Spink, the able, young British director of the Albanian program of yet another major relief agency, the International Rescue Committee, put it, "You know it's a

Photographs *by* NIKOS ECONOMOPOULOS/MAGNUM PHOTOS

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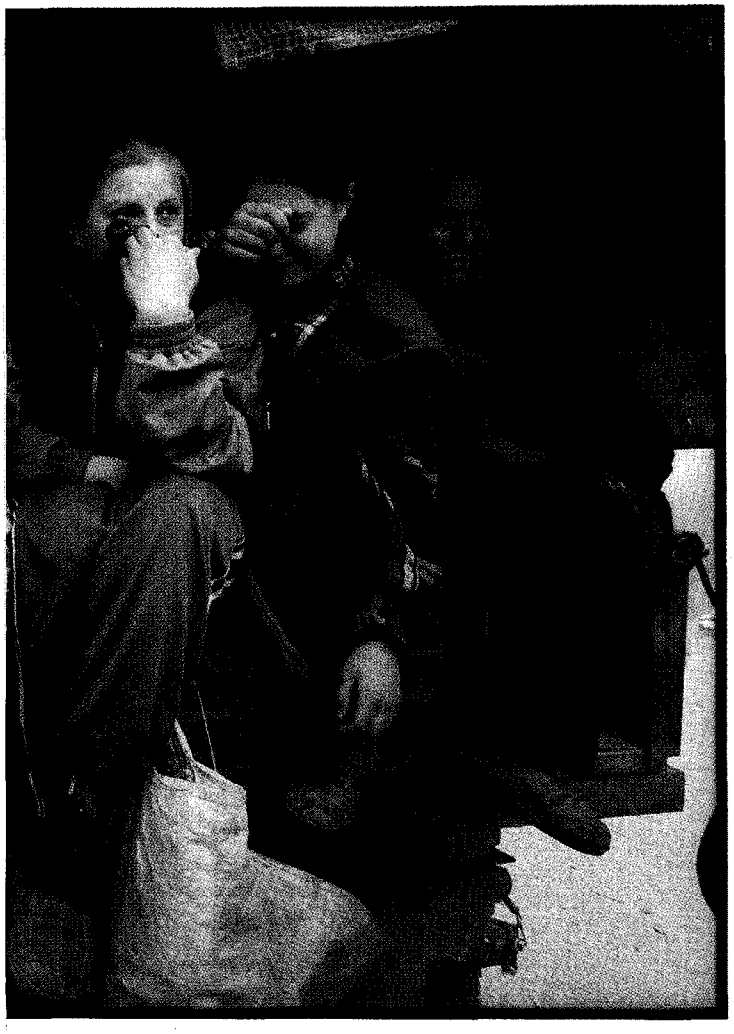
major disaster in the eyes of the world when the white vehicles begin to outnumber the local Mercedes."

He might have added that you also know this when the international press is almost as thick on the ground as the relief workers. Indeed, the two often operate symbiotically. After all, aid is at once the ultimate expression of altruism and a fiercely competitive business. As the International Rescue Committee's John Fawcett, perhaps the most experienced and certainly the most innovative aid worker dealing with



Kosovo, explains, "The received wisdom is the idea of market share; you go where governments or U.N. agencies want you to go to get your share of contracts that otherwise would go to other agencies." And one way to get such contracts—though not by any means necessarily the way Fawcett likes to operate—is by getting the press to publicize your work.

The various national branches of Doctors Without Borders pioneered this technique in the late '70s and early '80s. Other agencies soon followed suit. Today, all the major agencies involved in the Kosovo crisis have press officers. To hear each of them talk, you would barely imagine that any other agency was doing anything. And yet, for all the relief agencies' efforts, in the Kosovo crisis, more than in any other previous humanitarian disaster, these international private voluntary organizations have acted more like subcontractors to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to the U.S. Agency for International Development, to its European opposite number, the European Commission Humanitarian Office, and, above all, to NATO.

It is NATO that has built the camps for the refugees as they pour into Albania and Macedonia. It is NATO that has guarded the refugees from bandits in northern Albania—which is known as Albania's Appalachia, though it boggles the mind that so poor a country could contain within itself that much poorer a region. And it is NATO that has protected the refugees in Macedonia by serving as a buffer between the Kosovars and the ethnic Macedonians—for whom the arrival of so many ethnic Albanians represents a radical demographic shift in favor of that country's Albanian minority.

NATO'S EMERGENCE AS the preeminent aid organization in the crisis marks a radical departure from previous norms and is largely due to the UNHCR's failure to perform this role. In Bosnia, the UNHCR had distinguished itself—particularly under its first special envoy, Jose Maria Mendiluce—by breaking with its previous, rather cautious norms, and attempting, with great creativity and courage, to mitigate the humanitarian disaster as it unfolded and to bear witness to the atrocities of Serb (and later Croat) ethnic cleansing. No other U.N. agency had either as intelligent or as principled a view of the Bosnian conflict.

But in the case of Kosovo the agency was caught completely off guard. Many in the aid community privately grumble that the UNHCR's unpreparedness was all the more inexcusable given its previous experience in the region. "For Christ's sake," says one aid worker, "they'd been dealing with Balkan wars for the entire eight years they'd been going on. But they pre-positioned supplies outside Kosovo for no more than a hundred thousand refugees, refused to distribute material like plastic sheeting inside Kosovo for people who might become internally displaced, and exerted almost no political pressure and sounded no alarms. As for staff, it was the U.N. bureaucracy at its worst—a bunch of time-servers whose main ambition seemed to be to reassure their superiors in Geneva that everything was under control; in other words, a bunch of fucking ostriches, Lords of Poverty variety."

Other U.N. agencies have been similarly slow-moving—as illustrated by the announcement by an official of the U.N. Development Program, two weeks after the bombing campaign had started, that his group was now "looking to do a longer impact study" of the effect of the refugee inflow on Albania. Meanwhile, many U.S. government aid grandees in Tirana remain holed up in their comfortable hotels—forbidden by the State Department to travel in Albania except with large security details, owing to the supposed threat from groups loyal to Osama Bin Ladin and other Islamic fundamentalist terrorists.

UNHCR officials who have stuck it out from the start of the crisis in places like Kukes in northeastern Albania, a town of 25,000 that is the point of arrival for the bulk of the hundreds of thousands of Kosovar refugees to cross into Albania, are quick to point out that they, at least, are in the thick of the action. And they note that the UNHCR was not the only group that failed to anticipate the extent of the crisis. "I can't remember a single newspaper or TV reporter predicting

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Milosevic would ethnically cleanse all of Kosovo," says Ray Wilkinson, the organization's press officer in Kukes. "We were surprised along with the rest of the world." Furthermore, adds another UNHCR official: "Yes, we fucked up initially, but we're doing better today. We have a new team, including a new special envoy, and we are trying to sort out what went wrong."

IT IS EASY to see how in a place like Kukes anything that could go wrong would go wrong. It is a miserable town, a lawless badland in what could have been beautiful mountain country, if the water table and the lake had not been hopelessly polluted by the coal and chromium mines that once fueled the region's economy. There have been almost no jobs in the region since the mines were closed. Although in most of Albania the refugees have been greeted with open arms—"WELCOME, KOSOVAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS," reads the sign over the sports center that is now a refugee transit center in Tirana—the hospitality of Kukes has been understandably grudging at best.

The town is awash in petty crime, the roads are dangerous at night, and the infrastructure hasn't so much collapsed as it never existed in the first place. There is something of Zaire in Mobutu's time about the place, and something of Central Asia, both in its clan-ridden and in its Soviet police-state aspects. The KLA is everywhere. If a NATO ground war is ever launched, it will go from Kukes. (Of course, this is more wishful thinking on the part of aid workers and journalists—many of whom have lived through two of Slobodan Milosevic's wars of ethnic cleansing already—than a realistic prediction.) But, even if there is no ground war, the area will serve as a KLA staging ground for as long as Serb forces continue to operate in Kosovo.

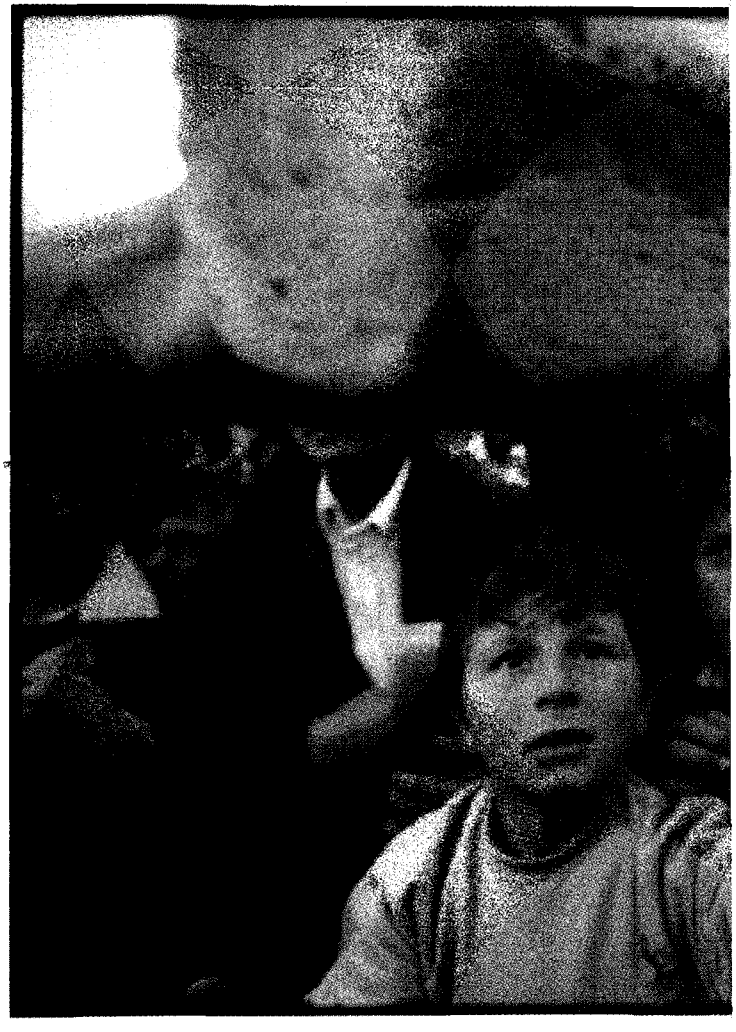
Some of the camps are extremely well-run, even opulent by refugee standards, like one built by the Italian Army that has a full medical center, and Port-o-san-style toilets more appropriate for an outdoor rock concert in Umbria than a refugee emergency. Others are appalling, like the now-closed camp in an abandoned chicken farm in Kruma, north of Kukes. But the broader issue is not about which camp is better or even whether people should be moved away from the northern border region into camps further south in Albania. The real question is whether the refugee emergency is going to be permanent—the millennium's answer to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency camps of the late '40s—or whether NATO actually intends to fight a war that will allow the refugees to return home to Kosovo.

And the outlook is not promising. The aid agencies are operating in an entirely new environment. But, then again, so is NATO. Although they are hurt and upset by the criticism that has been leveled against them, UNHCR officials, at least privately, are beginning to face the fact that, whatever happens, they will probably go out losers from the Kosovo crisis. NATO and its member governments seem to have not yet come to grips with the fact that the same future probably awaits them. In Skopje, I ran into an old friend from the foreign press corps in Sarajevo. He had been away for several months and was just returning.

"What's going on?" he asked.

I told him that I had been up at the crossing from Kosovo into Macedonia; the Macedonian border guards had been behaving with even more offhanded cruelty than usual, forcing refugees who had seen their relatives butchered to remain cooped up for hours in buses with neither water nor toilet facilities. The UNHCR, try as it might, could do nothing about this for the better part of the day. "We're losing this war," I said.

"Tell me something I don't know," he said flatly. But that's not the punch line. This is: An official of the U.S. Embassy in Skopje had been standing nearby. "I don't know how you



guys can talk that way," he said. "We're winning this thing. And I believe we will see it through."

"From your mouth to God's ear," I said.

"From the people who brought you the Dayton agreement and said it was a victory for American resolve and democratic values," a colleague who had been eavesdropping said after the diplomat had moved away.

Even then, three weeks ago, it was clear that the mass deportations of the Kosovars were going to continue until there were just enough ethnic Albanians left in Kosovo to create a humanitarian obstacle—in the literal as well as the figurative sense—to any NATO ground attack. For the time being, expelling Kosovars was not just something the Serb soldiers, policemen, and paramilitaries could do with impunity; it was good business. There was even an informal

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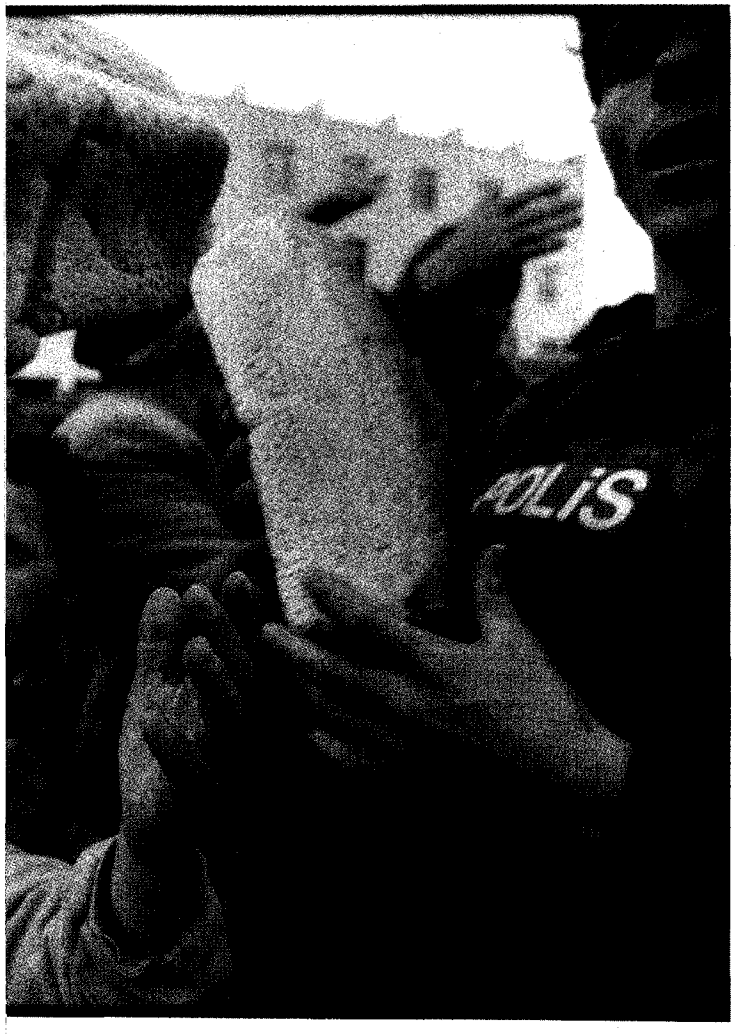
price list. This fact tended to get lost, for understandable reasons, in the newspaper and television accounts of what the refugees had gone through. When someone tells you she saw her husband get his throat cut, you tend to pay less attention to the fact that the murderers also demanded 1,000 German marks per child so that she could take the rest of her family on the road toward Albania.

And yet it may well turn out that greed played a huge role in the willingness of ordinary Serbs to participate in Operation Horseshoe—Slobodan Milosevic's plan, concocted almost a year before the current crisis, for a Final Solution to



the "problem" of the ethnic Albanians. One of the greatest hidden dynamics of the Kosovo crisis, at least as powerful as any history of ethnic antipathy (though, unlike Bosnia, that did exist in Kosovo), has been not only that the Kosovars were more prosperous than their Albanian cousins—everyone in Europe is richer than the Albanians, even the Macedonians and Moldovans—but that they were richer than their Serb neighbors as well. To expel them was to have a chance at their television sets, their gold rings, and their cash.

The chance at loot, as well as the operational necessity of making sure they did not stray too far from the corridors toward the border along which the Serbs were pushing them, explains why the Kosovars were robbed in their homes and robbed at the border (as well as stripped of the identity documents, property deeds, and marriage and birth certificates they would need were they to return) but were largely left alone during the march out of Kosovo. Obviously, the NATO bombing is a catastrophe for the prosperity of Serbia. But that is in the long run, which is a measurement that ordinary Serbs proved incapable of considering when they supported first the war in Croatia, then the war in Serbia. In the short run, a lot of Serb fighters, or just ordinary Serbs with an eye for a quick Deutsche mark, are making a lot of money from the Kosovars as they expel them. That alone makes Milosevic's task far easier than it might have been otherwise.

Those Kosovars who remain might serve as a buffer against a NATO attack. There will be no Desert Storm in Kosovo, even in the unlikely eventuality that NATO summons the will to launch the ground war. If NATO attacks, it will face a human wall of Kosovars between it and the Serb forces. It has been difficult enough to cope with the demographic bomb that Milosevic launched on Macedonia by sending the ethnic Albanian Kosovar refugees into a country whose dominant ethnic group was already pro-Serb and fearful of the Albanian minority within. In Kosovo, the situation would be exponentially worse.

"NATO is not in the business of meals on wheels; it should be in the business of guns and missiles," an American officer told me in Skopje. "But it will take two or three months for a ground war to get going, and the American people are not going to go for it. In the meantime, Milosevic will probably try to spread this thing into Albania, Montenegro, and, above all, right here in Macedonia. Everyone knows the Macedonians don't want anyone in the country."

IF ANYTHING, THE situation was worse than he was saying. The night before, I had gone to a rock concert in the main square of Skopje—Macedonia Square, or, as some older residents of the city persist in calling it, Tito Square. The concert was a virtual clone of the anti-NATO concerts going on in Belgrade and other Serb cities at the time. Here, though, the crowd was not Serb but overwhelmingly Macedonian. It was a beautiful night, full of what my rock-and-roll-besotted friends in Sarajevo during the siege would have called "good energy." Handsome boys and good-looking girls stood pressed together in the vast crowd, swaying to the music when it was soft and lyrical or dancing frenetically when it was driving. At the edges stood families with small children. The vendors were doing a good business. There was something so benign and attractive about it all, it could have been a Balkan Woodstock. Plenty of things about the Balkans make you feel you are in a time warp. Why not that?

But, of course, it wasn't Woodstock, 1969. If you want a comparison, try Nuremberg, 1936. The hands waving in the air were not making the v-sign of peace but the three-fingered salute of Serb nationalism. They brandished American flags where the stars were swastikas or the ubiquitous target signs that have now migrated from the Balkans to Beijing. "ADOLPH CLINTON," the signs read, and "NATO MURDERERS." The slogan, "We are all targets," reflected the depth with which—never mind Vukovar, never mind Srebrenica, never mind what was happening in Kosovo at that very moment—those in the crowd felt themselves the victims.

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War and Yugonostalgia, Serb nationalism and anti-Americanism; they made for a heady mix that night. The quality of the music was high; the energy was fantastic; the crowd was terrifying. "Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia," they shouted between songs. "Peace in the Balkans, peace for all!" a well-known Macedonian singer called Rebecca shouted. "Milosevic! Peace! Milosevic! Peace!" the crowd shouted back.

Earlier, I had heard an official of the German branch of the Catholic aid organization Caritas observe wonderingly: "It's much worse than I thought. I believe we will have a civil war here in Macedonia soon. Everyone is getting ready—the KLA, Milosevic's people, the Macedonians. It's like a gasoline lake. I am very surprised, but I am sure."

At the time, I had thought he was exaggerating. After the concert, I was less certain. And yet both U.S. State Department officials and NATO military officials, who have consistently downplayed attacks on their own personnel and the vandalism of their vehicles, seemed strangely unperturbed. "Why is this operation being judged so quickly?" a member of U.S. Ambassador Christopher Hill's staff asked a group of journalists plaintively. A more senior official, whom human rights activists unfailingly cite as one of the most scrupulous and conscience-ridden within the department, said more or less the same thing during a lightning visit to Skopje.

"Why are you so sure it's a failure?" he asked.

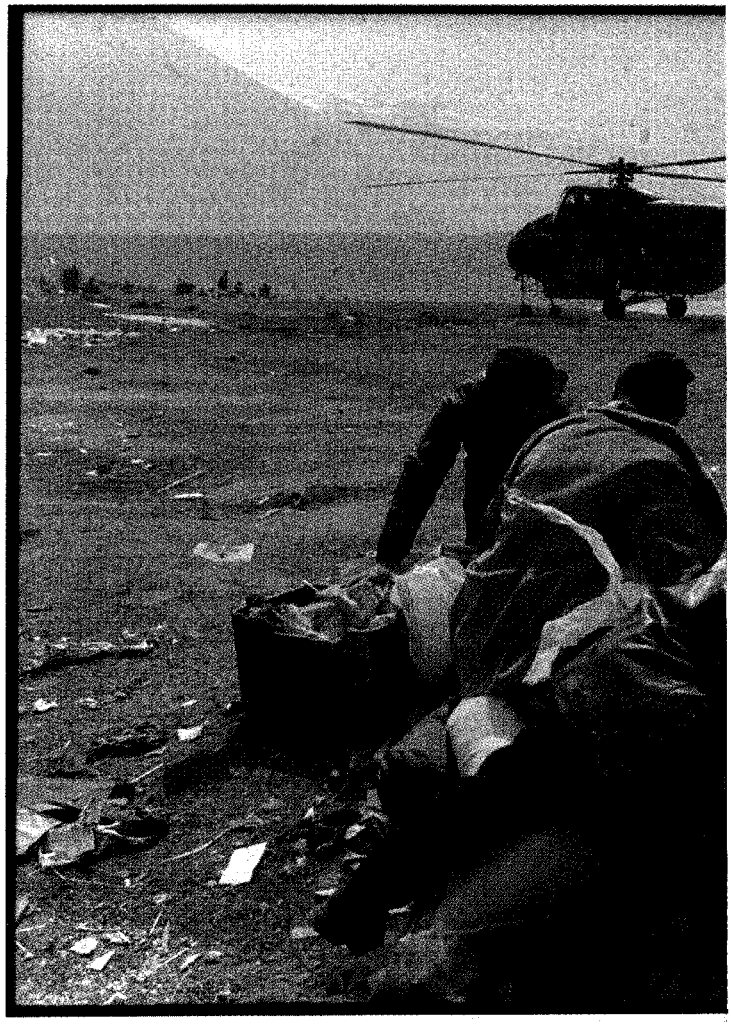
Because, one reporter told him, the results of the bombing have amounted to increased refugee flows, the beginning of the destabilization of Macedonia, and the destruction of modern Serbia. The official could barely contain his exasperation. "It's a process," he said, as evenly as he could. "We don't yet know how it will end."

Some U.S. diplomats put their faith in the influence of John McCain and other pro-war Republicans in Washington. Others take hope in the conviction that NATO simply couldn't lose the first war it had chosen to fight in its 50-year history. The American officer I met in Skopje was betting on the Apache attack helicopters. They were being brought into Albania just at that time. "The Apaches are going to turn the corner on this," he told me. "They're going to turn this into a different war with the average Serb soldier experiencing," he grinned, "a much more interesting life."

His enthusiasm was as contagious as his arguments were unconvincing. Having predicted a radical change on the battlefield, he went on to predict a deepening of the humanitarian crisis. "There's going to be as big a refugee crisis inside Kosovo as there is outside now," he said, "and that's assuming we go in after an agreement. Its magnitude could be triple what we face now." He paused. "Maybe that's Milosevic's plan—to rubber band the crisis back into Kosovo."

When I repeated this later to an aid-worker friend, he just shook his head. Already by late April, it had become clear that only Milosevic had a strategy. What NATO, the international organizations, and the aid agencies had was a wish list and a set of tasks and mandates, many of which put them at cross purposes with one another. The UNHCR worried that NATO's dominance in the relief operation would destroy its autonomy and its ability to perform its refugee protection functions, which, after all, was the organization's original purpose. As Ray Wilkinson put it, "We worry that NATO may take over everything, both the military and civilian roles." But, he added, "If we don't turn to NATO, whom do we turn to?"

For its part, NATO was fighting a war that, if the historical precedents of other bombing campaigns—World War II Germany, Vietnam, post-Desert Storm Iraq—were indicative, was unlikely to force Milosevic to give in. NATO officials buried themselves in detail and found, to the surprise of many and the discomfiture of some, that building and administering refugee camps was something they did extremely well. But in the final analysis their success was an emblem of their military failure. An operation whose original stated aim was to forestall ethnic cleansing, and is still supposedly dedicated to reversing it, is now principally involved with caring for refugees who are unlikely to return home. Indeed, by this stage of the game the food and shelter of the refugee camps may have turned into a magnet drawing more and more people out of their blasted villages in Kosovo.



The rule of thumb among refugee officials is that a refugee who stays away for more than a year or two is unlikely to return. And yet, by moving refugees away from the Albanian border (for their safety), or submitting to some extent to the Macedonian government's demand that a refugee be reset-

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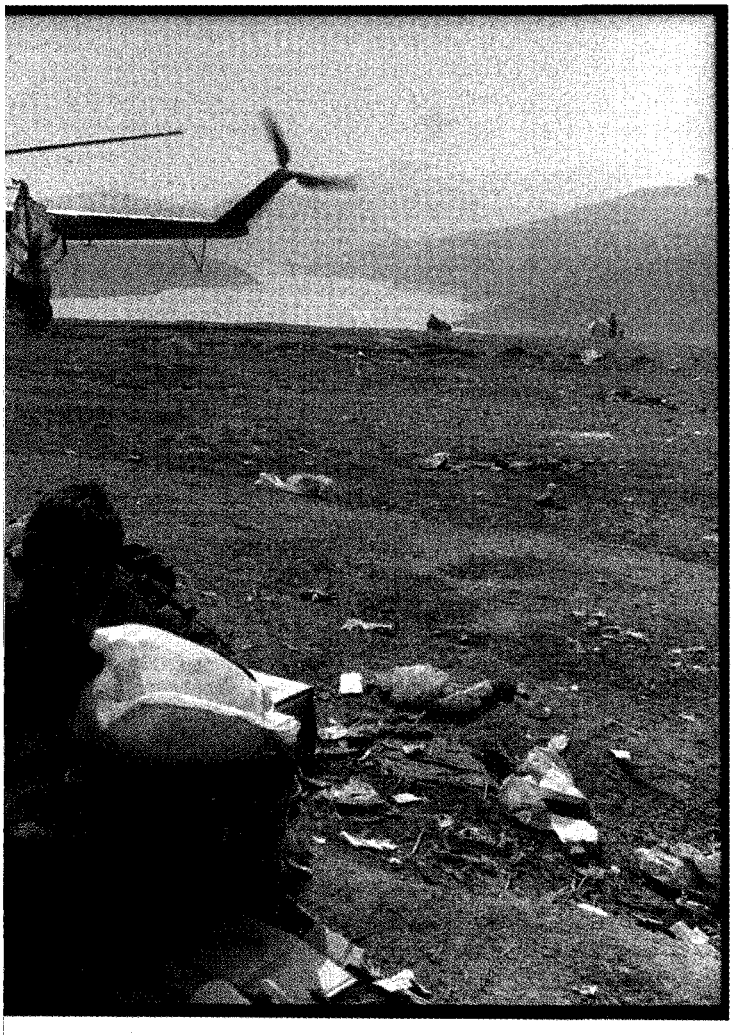
tled outside Macedonia for every refugee that is let in (to forestall a political explosion), NATO is doing exactly what it least wants to. It is accepting the role of guardian of the refugees and, to an increasing degree, contributing to the ethnic cleansing. This dilemma was one the International Committee of the Red Cross already faced in northern Bosnia in 1992, and, like NATO today, it chose to facilitate the Muslims' departures. But everyone knows now, as everyone knew then, however much we choose to focus on the family reunions and the kindness of U.S. soldiers in the resettlement camp in New Jersey, that the choice is an unspeakable one.



To allow the refugees to continue to rot in camps is unacceptable. But to resettle refugees in the United States, or Canada, or Switzerland, or Britain, however decent or practical a gesture, is to convert the refugees into exiles. These Kosovars are joining well-established immigrant communities; they are going to stay in the West, as most of us would if we were in their shoes; many were trying to get there before the crisis. And so Slobodan Milosevic will have his way, as he did in Bosnia—where the single greatest failure of the post-Dayton period, apart from not arresting Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, has been that almost no refugees have returned to areas where they do not belong to the dominant ethnic group. The demography of Kosovo will be changed through our good offices as well as Milosevic's murderous intent.

Obviously, were NATO seriously contemplating a ground war, a more sanguine view would at least be defensible. And, even with a NATO victory, the problems would be close to insurmountable, at least in the short term. As John Fawcett put it: "We already know that, when the Serbs leave, they will blow up every water plant and poison every well. You will have a combination of a security risk and a humanitarian crisis. Our people who are fighting the war will have to cope with a humanitarian crisis at the same time."

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, the surprise might be that the Clinton administration has shown as much backbone as it has. But, as a member of the Kosovar Albanian delegation to the Rambouillet talks put it to me bitterly, "It seems as if NATO and Milosevic increasingly have the same interest: to end the bombing and bring the war to a close as quickly as possible."

One way to move toward this end without appearing to do so would be to "humanitarianize" the crisis; that is, to begin to talk about innocent victims and, by implication, to argue that the rights and wrongs of the dispute are secondary. That, to some extent, is what Jesse Jackson has been trying to do since his return from Belgrade. The reappearance on center stage of the United Nations and Kofi Annan, who more or less wrote the book on this tactic in Bosnia, suggests that just such a move is in the offing. Since then, Yasushi Akashi, the U.N. special representative who found nothing much to choose, morally, between the Bosnian Serbs and the Sarajevo government, has visited Belgrade and smilingly repeated for the press, as he did so often during the Bosnian war, the current Serb position. For those of us who were in Bosnia, the sight was sickening beyond words.

The point, of course, as Fawcett said to me in Tirana, is that "this is not a humanitarian crisis; this is a political crisis." Having lived through the siege of Sarajevo, Fawcett has the gravest doubts about the humanitarian's proper role. "This is our last chance," he said. "The Kosovo crisis is a battle for our soul, the soul of humanitarianism."

For Fawcett, the solution is clear: Milosevic must be routed. "When fascism goes violent," he said, "you must use violence." But, despite the efforts of people like Fawcett to galvanize their fellow aid workers and the NATO governments in a different direction, and to make clear that humanitarian aid cannot be used, as it was in Bosnia, as a fig leaf for political cowardice, there is disgrace in the air, both in Washington and Brussels and on the ground in Macedonia and Albania. In the long run, it is almost inevitable that an independent Kosovo will come into being. The stupidest thing about this stupid war is that, for all their talk of primordial attachment to Kosovo, almost no Serb actually wants to live there. So, in the end, if NATO does not see things through to the end, the KLA will. But thousands if not tens of thousands more people will be killed and the prospects of a democratic Kosovo all but extinguished. Meanwhile, the notion that a guerrilla army will eventually succeed where the largest and most powerful military alliance in the history of the world failed should be preposterous. But it is not. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Dream Time

IN THE MIDST OF THE ACTION of **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (Fox Searchlight), Puck stops to pee. This is not even the low point of the film.

Michael Hoffman adapted the play to the screen and directed it. Hoffman's dossier includes, among other pictures, a bright modern comedy-romance, *One Fine Day*, and a heavy period drama, *Restoration*. Much of the time, his version of the *Dream* is almost a contest between these two types. But this contest is swallowed in a larger struggle that, scene by scene, foot by foot, ensnares most films of Shakespeare—a struggle that might as well be inscribed on the screen as a supertitle: "Please, audience! We *know* it's Shakespeare; but see how we're trying to keep it from being dull."

Very few Shakespeare films have been free of this subtext—most notably, Branagh's work—but Branagh's passion for the plays, and his experience with them, flowed from the stage on to the screen to produce new incarnations rather than cultural obeisance by movies to classics. And for the most part Branagh was supported by actors who relished the chance to do in a new form what they had always loved doing; they weren't entering a strange, intimidating obstacle race.

This new film shows no sign of the (let's call it) Branagh attitude. It seems, though of course this is supposition, that Hoffman and his producers, after deciding to film the play, surely out of love for it, faced the frightening fact—revealed in that invisible supertitle—that they were actually daring to put Shakespeare on film. Then they had to face another present-day stern injunction about Shakespeare that applies either on stage or film: to do something *to* the play. First, obviously, the setting. Who would care about a film set in and near ancient Athens? Even Shakespeare's Elizabethanized ancient Athens? Damned few. Where to set it, then? Among foreign countries—and it had to be abroad—which was the most "in"? No question: Italy. And which part of Italy? Again, no question: Tuscany. And what about all the references to Athens in the text? Simple: they invented a Tuscan town called Monte Athena. (Many of the exteriors were actually shot in Montepulciano, which, incidentally, was Henry James's favorite town in Tuscany.) As for the magic wood, they couldn't possibly use a real forest, they needed room to maneuver people and cameras. Seemingly, they remembered the magic wood that Max Reinhardt had constructed for his 1937 Hollywood *Dream*, and they tried for an equivalent studio job—ponds and lakes and towering trees. Then they apparently remembered Peter Brook's 1971 theater production and gave Titania a suspended leafy bed.

Next, the costumes. Modern clothes would jar the mood, yet doublet and hose and hoop skirts and perukes would distance the action from the audience. Perhaps someone remembered A.J. Antoon's fine production of *Much Ado About Nothing* in Central Park in 1972 (preserved on tape), which was costumed in clothes of 1900. The turn of the century was far enough back to support romance, yet close enough so that the suits and dresses looked something like our clothes, would feel "comfortable" to us. Then there were all those cute 1900 props you could bring in—big gramophone horns, bicycles. The fleeing lovers on bicycles in the woods!—oh, the possible gimmicks to divert the audience's impatience with verse. Hoffman kept grabbing at diversions, with a shrug for overall directorial design.

About his adaptation of the play, we can only sigh at the necessities. Of course many of the long speeches were condensed (some of them are usually condensed in the theater), and of course anyone who knows the play will wonder why one passage was retained and another shrunk or omitted, why some matters were added. (Chief curiosity: Nick Bottom was given a shrewish wife, whose few lines are in Italian.) But the adaptation, though a thing of shreds and patches, could have been made to work—shorn of the desperate gimmickry.

And with a different cast. Two of the actors are pleasingly secure. Rupert Everett, as Oberon, gives the fairy king other-worldly ease. Dominic West gives the lovelorn Lysander clarity and verve. Then comes a string of mediocrities. Michelle Pfeiffer, as Titania, makes the fairy queen sound like Beverly Hills in space: she is not unintelligent, but her speech is out of key. Calista Flockhart, as Helena, and Anna Friel, as her unintended rival in love, Hermia, both strive hard, and so does Christian Bale, the Demetrius, but all three give the impression that they are wrestling with Shakespeare rather than fulfilling their roles. If the director wanted a wry Puck whose arteries are beginning to harden (though why fairies should age is not explained), then Stanley Tucci was the right man. Two of the cast are disasters. David Strathairn, supposedly the mighty Theseus, looks and sounds like a bond salesman who has strayed in from a costume party. Sophie Marceau, very pretty, cannot speak English well enough to handle even the few lines that are left to Hippolyta.

But the prime catastrophe is the man who is probably the best actor in the cast. What in the name of heaven (or Avon) is Kevin Kline doing in the role of Nick Bottom? Kline is one of the most clever, keen, technically polished comedians currently on the screen or stage—therefore an actor thoroughly capable of moving us to tears as well as laughs—but what is he doing as one of the "rude mechanicals," the proles who have banded together to put on a play? Possibly Hoffman thought it would be good to have an attractive figure of a man as Titania's dream lover, even with an ass's head, but when Bottom, the alleged weaver, joins the tinker and tailor and bellows-mender in rehearsal, he looks like a slick director who has been hired to stage a labor-union show. Kline has no trace of the boisterous, big-hearted, stage-struck amateur. "Bottom is Shakespeare's Everyman," says Harold Bloom, who sees him as a predecessor of Falstaff. Kevin Kline? No Shakespearean way. (A puzzle: Bottom appears for his first scene in a spiffy three-piece suit. Two pranksters pour bottles of wine on him from above, and he accepts the act as a small annoyance. This man?)

Lastly, the music. Another odd mixture. Mendelssohn at the start, naturally, and later, too. But along the way we get the *brindisi* from *Traviata* for no relevant reason, and even more oddly we get—twice, in amorous scenes—"Casta diva" from *Norma*. Since the first words of the aria mean "chaste goddess" and chastity is not the mood of the moment, are we hovering on the edge of a recondite joke?

There's a recently published, very valuable stage history of the *Dream* called *Our Midnight Revels*. The author, Gary

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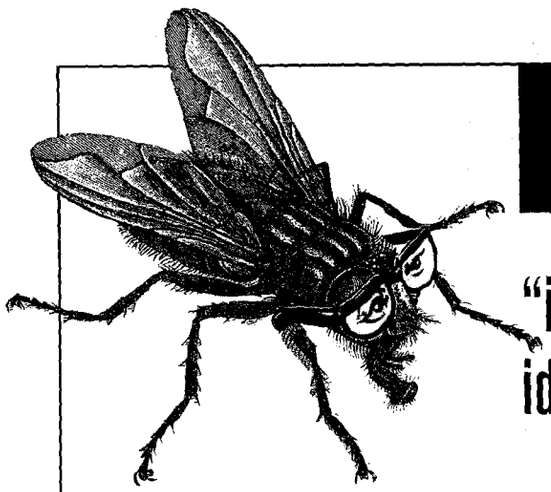

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Jay Williams of Catholic University, says on the first page: "My primary interest throughout this performance history has been to understand each major production in its cultural moment." (For instance, he says of Peter Brook's production, which arrived just at the end of the swinging '60s, that its "appeal lay largely in its celebration of its own youthful, aggressive contemporary engagement with Shakespeare and the possibility of *communitas*, which it promised in its curtain-call lovefest.") Trying to apply the Williams criterion to this film, I can discern only a blend of ambition and fear. Hoffman and the producers self-evidently responded to the play's enchantment, but they also self-evidently didn't quite know for whom they were making the picture, didn't sense a "cultural moment"; so, in a sort of aesthetic trepidation, they put in everything they could think of—Bottom's wife, the bicycles, etc. The result is a film that, unlike Brook's production, is constantly searching for its audience.

The worst thing about the picture is that it takes the idea of Shakespeare on film back to where it was before Branagh. ■

The Female Misogynist

By MARGARET TALBOT

The Whole Woman by Germaine Greer

(Knopf, 363 pp., $25)

I.

WHATEVER ELSE Germaine Greer's new book will be called, it will almost certainly be called a work of feminism. There are reasons for this, but they have almost nothing to do with the book itself, which is a sour and undiscriminating litany of charges against men—all men, men as nature created them—wrapped around the willfully obtuse argument that little or nothing has improved for American and European women over the last thirty years. *The Whole Woman* presents men as irredeemable and equality as a hoax. For this reason, the book is just a sideshow, a shrill distraction from the humane and transformative and exhilarating vision of justice that has animated the enterprise of feminism since the late eighteenth century.

In that vision, let us remind ourselves, the struggle for equal dignity, equal possibility, and equal worth was supposed to change and to benefit men, too. Women's rights were thwarted by culture, not by nature; by cruel social arrangements, not by timeless male troglodytism. "We do not fight with man himself," the nineteenth-century feminist Ernestine Rose observed, "but only with bad principles." In the great feminist vision, neither men nor women were to be defined by, let alone reduced to, their anatomy. For liberal feminism, as Martha Nussbaum has argued, sex, like caste and rank, was a "morally irrelevant characteristic" that acquired its significance historically and not biologically—through law and custom, which are amenable to moral and historical agency. Otherwise politics are meaningless, and women have reason only for despair.

In Greer's view, however, men are "doomed to competition and injustice, not merely towards females, but towards children, animals, and other men." The concept of doom never served much of a purpose in feminism, which is, at its core, hopeful and ameliorative; but Greer presses it into service. After all, she writes, men are "freaks of nature ... full of queer obsessions about fetishistic activities and fantasy goals." They are single-minded, and "single-mindedness produces hideously anti-social behaviors, from paedophile rings to waging war." They are slothful and sponging—and irredeemably so, because their "anthropoid ancestors" were slothful and sponging, too. A woman who burdens herself with a man in the form of a husband will likely find that "the cost of feeding him, grooming him, humouring him, and financing his recreation is way out of proportion to the contribution that he makes in return."

The home truth is that men hate women. And "there is no point in trying to establish" why. (Why think, when you can rage?) "Men bash women because they enjoy it; they torture women as they might torture an animal or pull the wings off flies...." So repelled are they by their girlfriends, their wives, their sisters, their mothers, and their daughters that they are doing their malevolent best to eradicate us altogether. As Greer barmily puts it, "If state-of-the-art gestation cabinets could manufacture children and virtual fetishes could furnish sexual services, men would not regret the passing of real, smelly, bloody, noisy, hairy women." (Smelliness and bloodiness and noisiness and hairiness being the signal qualities of "real" women.) If that is what you really believe, what is the point of any concerted movement for social reform? The answer is simple: Greer sees no point in it. The only tattered hope that she holds aloft is her own naïve enamorment with the gender apartheid of certain Middle Eastern cultures. "I gazed at women in segregated societies," she writes, "and found them in many ways stronger than women who would not go into a theatre or a restaurant without a man." The "dignified alternative" for women in the United States and Europe would be to segregate themselves, perhaps in "matrilocal families." Purdahhood is powerful!

Why, then, will such fatalistic claptrap be dignified with the good name of feminism? Why, for that matter, is *The Whole Woman* a bestseller in England? Why does the Knopf catalogue praise the book as a "shattering critique" and a "call to arms?" (Even PR should show a little decency.) One reason, certainly, is Greer's reputation as a fire-starter of 1970s feminism, a writer who galvanized and outraged. Another reason, a more alarming one, is the insidious reach of an attitude that we will call Men-Are-Dogs-ism. This increasingly popular sensibility represents a convergence of influences: the animal determinism of evolutionary psychology; essentializing bromides of the sort made famous by *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*; sitcom-style girl-bonding; the frightened, triumphalist rage of a certain strain of women's rock-and-roll. In the end, it is this way of thinking—or rather, this escape from thinking—that Germaine Greer exemplifies. *The Whole Woman* is empty-headed vehemence of a discouragingly familiar kind.

II.

IN 1970, *The Female Eunuch* made Germaine Greer famous, and it made feminism famous, too. "Every self-respecting woman on the Left owned a copy or still owns a copy somewhere around the house, dog-eared and coffee-stained with use," Lisa Jardine recently recalled in the London *Observer*. "[F]or women born in the immediate postwar years, there was 'before Greer' and 'after Greer'; the book, and Germaine's atten-

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tion-grabbing brand of stand-up comic, in-your-face assertiveness taught us all how to behave badly and take control of our lives." *The Female Eunuch* was the sort of book that wives read in defiance of their husbands, copping a thrill of insurrection. It was the sort of book, according to Christine Wallace's informants in *Untamed Shrew*, her new biography of Greer, that broke up dinner parties, sending fondue sets crashing to the floor. (The copy that I recently took out of the library—the original hardback with Greer in a feather boa on the back and her name on the front in bloopy purple letters—contained this time-capsule inscription: "Sheila the Peela: Don't tell Pat about this. We decided a little lib would be good for you.")

Greer herself was a 31-year-old Cambridge Ph.D. in 1970, transplanted from Sydney and living the Boho life in London. Within a year of publishing *The Female Eunuch*, she had debated Norman Mailer in a truculent disputation at Town Hall in New York, turned up on the cover of *Life* magazine as the "saucy feminist that even men like," and inspired innumerable women to stop wearing underpants. She was, in short, the "libbers'" first real celebrity, a crossover-hit, with one Mary Quant-ified leg firmly in the counterculture and one firmly in the bestseller lists.

It must be said, though, that *The Female Eunuch* has not aged especially well. In this regard, it is quite different from, say, *The Feminine Mystique*, whose thick description, scrupulous reporting, and acute diagnosis of the social and psychological costs of restricting women's orbit make it, even now, illuminating to read. Betty Friedan's book even has a very particular utility today, as an antidote to Nick-at-Nite nostalgia for an era in which suburban housewifery really was the dominant outlet for female talent and Donna Reed really was the model. All those conservative women who wax rapturous about stay-at-home-momdom (while pursuing ambitious writing careers themselves) should be obliged to re-read it annually.

The Female Eunuch, by contrast, is thoroughly steeped in the patchouli-scented idiosyncrasies of its time and its place, and especially of its author. It is written with vigor, certainly; but its vigor is what hobbles it. There is a great deal of hectoring of women for cooperating in the suppression of their own libidos (Greer was under the sway of the Reichian religion of sexual energy) and adopting the characteristics of the castrate: "timidity, plumpness, languor, delicacy, and preciosity." There is a certain amount of head-girl disdain for lesser—and especially less sexually liberated—females. This privileged sisterly snobbery seems a bit off-point for a time when women still faced institutionalized job discrimination, a criminal justice system preoccupied with the sexual purity of rape victims, a general disregard of, and lack of resources for, women who were beaten by their husbands, and other unglamorous barriers to just bucking up and getting on with things.

Germaine Greer by Vint Lawrence for The New Republic

The Female Eunuch, like *The Whole Woman*, is dismissive of organized feminism past and present, and bored by political solutions. Still, it is flushed with a sense of possibility—dizzy at times, but inspiriting—that is almost entirely missing from the new book. In 1970, Greer writes stirringly of female independence, of "joy in the struggle" for it.

> Joy does not mean riotous glee, but it does mean the purposive employment of energy in a self-chosen enterprise. It does mean pride and confidence.... To be emancipated from helplessness and need and walk freely upon the earth: that is your birthright. To refuse hobbles and deformity and possession of your body and glory in its power, accepting its own laws of loveliness. To have something to desire, something to make, something to achieve, and at last something genuine to give. To be free from guilt and shame and the tireless self-discipline of women. To stop pretending and dissembling, cajoling and manipulating, and begin to control and sympathize. To claim the masculine virtues of magnanimity and generosity and courage.

It was a humane vision; but so much of this vision of new womanhood was to be achieved, in Greer's view, by specifically sexual means: by smashing monogamy, by promoting the commitment-free fuck, and so on. Greer's self-satisfied hedonism crippled her manifesto. In the first place, there were the Greerian idiosyncrasies that made it unlikely to mobilize a real following: she doted on the vagina, at a time when other feminists were cheering the rediscovery of the clitoris. For Greer, the real significance of her favorite female organ resided not so much in its capacity for pleasure as in its capacity for power, since it actively "embraced and stimulated the penis instead of taking it." A minor distinction, you might say—ever hear of Kegel exercises?—but a distinction that promised, for Greer, nothing less than emancipation. More importantly, the Greerian dream of sexual liberation had little relevance for the spheres of life in which women spend most of their days and define much of their identity—work, family, citizenship.

At the time, though, Greer's high-minded randiness—and her gleeful exhibitionism, as when she posed nude for *Screw* magazine, called herself a "super-

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whore," and wrote paeans to pornography and to the joy of sex with rock stars—had a kind of propagandistic purpose. It signaled that feminism need not mean sexlessness. At a cultural moment when flaunting one's sexual attractiveness and seriously committing oneself to women's advancement really were regarded as contradictory acts (as they no longer are, the latest round of complaints against feminist puritanism notwithstanding), this was probably useful. Indeed, what has been so odd about Greer's incarnation of the last fifteen years or so—during which she has written at least two books (*Sex and Destiny* and *The Change*) in which she broadcast her disgust with promiscuity and argued that intercourse itself degrades women—is that she has made no attempt to explain her reversal, or even to acknowledge it.

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG with changing one's mind in the light of experience. Greer is hardly the first feminist to recognize that the sexual revolution was not an unmitigated blessing for women. What is striking about Greer is that she is so unwilling to take responsibility for her earlier positions, and so averse to arriving at a middle ground. Most feminists—most women—have little difficulty with the notion that neither rock groupiedom and the "zipless fuck," nor the renunciation of intercourse and contraception as so much pandering to men's "penetrative" agenda, hold much promise. Lots of people in their forties and fifties look back with a wince or a smirk on their own days and nights of Aquarian bed-hopping—but they do not devise an entire theory of gender relations on the basis of it. Greer, though, is a creature of absolutes. The substance of her ideas matters less to her than their radicalism. And so her internal gyroscope is permanently out of whack.

She is in the outrage business. In England, Greer's lurchings from hyperbole to hyperbole—combined with her polemical flair in countless television and radio appearances—are often taken as signs of genius. Her more bizarre and offensive positions—such as her defense of female genital mutilation, which may be found in *The Whole Woman*—are met with argument, but not with disgust. Her spiteful attacks on other women—she assailed the journalist Suzanne Moore for her "hair bird's-nested all over the place, fuck-me shoes and three fat inches of cleavage," and remarked of the novelist Fay Weldon, "I know she has had a facelift, and I know she's on HRT, but would that have such a devastating effect on the cerebellum?"—elicit the sort of nervous titters with which you might flatter a formidable and eccentric aunt. Greer may be eccentric, but she is also, as one British journalist put it, "dangerously close to becoming a national treasure." This sort of indulgence presupposes that Greer is still producing something resembling real and original analysis. But what is remarkable about *The Whole Woman*—Greer's particular crotchets aside—is that it has so much in common with the general run of Men-are-Dogs-ism. She is no longer travelling to the beat of a different drum. Her stunts have become banal.

III.

IN THE MEN-ARE-DOGS theory of life, anatomy is destiny. Men always have been, and always will be, loutish, messy, insensitive, and helplessly programmed to spread their seed far and wide. Women always have been, and always will be, the moral betters of men, and also their dupes. Real women sometimes talk this way, of course; but it is in television humor and and other artifacts of mass culture that this line of thinking receives its fullest elaboration. In pop fiction, it is the language of bitch sessions at the wine bar. ("Bastards!" yells one of Bridget Jones's friends in the eponymous diary, "pouring three-quarters of a glass of Kir Royale straight down her throat. Stupid, smug, arrogant, manipulative, self-indulgent bastards. They exist in a total Culture of Entitlement. Pass me one of those mini-pizzas, will you?") In pop psychology, it is the language of Mars and Venus. You hear it in you-go-girl jokes about Lorena Bobbit. You see it in those posters hanging in dorm rooms that say "10 Reasons Why a Dog is Better than a Man." You see it in Must-She TV and in commercials where wives joke smugly about how "well-trained" their husbands are, and in the explanatory use to which pundits put testosterone.

Lately, Men-Are-Dogs-ism has acquired some intellectual respectability from the pop psychology of our day, which is evolutionary psychology. The new Darwinists are strangely obsessed with the supposedly deep and constitutive and ineradicable differences between men and women—differences that are allegedly "hard-wired" by the machinery of natural selection. Since the most successful of our tree-swinging ancestors were those males who propagated their genes most widely, men today are more promiscuous than women. They just can't help it. They also have stronger sex drives, and seek out the sort of dewy-skinned, dewy-eyed (read: young) partners likely to provide a happy uterine home for their seed. And women, whose tree-swinging ancestors cared for little else but finding a nice papa monkey for their young, have lower sex drives and prefer the kind of hominid who can give them stability—the older and the richer, the better. (By this calculus of genetic self-interest, as Natalie Angier has pointed out, baldness ought to be a real turn-on for women.)

There is plenty of empirical evidence to complicate and to counter these generalizations, not least our own experiences of women and men who fit neither mold. There is a preponderance of studies that show that most psychological sex differences are small to moderate, and exceeded by variation within each sex. In few other aspects of life, certainly, would we regard animal behavior or the behavior of our anthropoid ancestors as inescapable blueprints for our own actions. (Indeed, as Angier puts it in her delightful new book, *Woman: An Intimate Geography*, "many nonhuman female primates gallivant about rather more than we might have predicted before primatologists began observing their behavior in the field—more, far more, than is necessary for the sake of reproduction.") Most importantly, it is a fundamental lesson of human history that a change in cultural norms can effect a change in sexual behavior—so that, for instance, when women are given the social opportunity and the cultural sanction, many of them will not feel it necessary to hide their libidos (and their thongs). For the evo-psycho school of misogyny (and it *is* misogyny, whether it is delivered in liberal or conservative voices), it is enough that we have all known men and women who resemble the evolutionary stereotypes. But in truth it is *not* enough. The reality of biological differences is undeniable, but it is also not the only reality, or the most significant reality. Yet Darwin brings so much comfort to unregenerate males....

Men-Are-Dogs-ism finds other support in the culture as well. It draws on the sort of "difference feminism" in which women are seen as morally superior creatures—more empathetic, kinder, better listeners, and so on. This tradition of feminine self-congratulation extends from the subset of suffragists who argued for the sweetly civilizing consequences of the women's vote to Carol Gilligan and Deborah Tannen in our day. It need not rest on a theory of innate difference, and many of its adherents explicitly say that they are talking about socialized characteristics; but their accounts have a way of slipping into essentialism—all the more so since they place so much value on the traditionally feminine virtues. These feminists restore women to the pedestal that they set out to destroy.

The difference feminists could have argued that there are jerks of both sexes, and that men in general are prodded by a variety of social clues to express their jerk-

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iness in one way—by crushing beer cans on their heads, say, or by pummeling people—while women in general express their jerkiness in another way—by emotional manipulation or verbal abuse; and they could have argued that both these tendencies are subject to change as cultural expectations change, though they will in all probability never be interchangeable. But that is not what the difference feminists wish to argue. They are not especially struck by the infinite variety of human beings. Like the evolutionary psychologists, they prefer to believe that men are one way and women are another way, and so it has been and so it shall be. And what point is there in social and political reform, if the problem is biological? Genes are impervious to legislation.

FROM THE EARLY CHAPTERS of *The Whole Woman*, it is clear that Germaine Greer's feminism has devolved into Men-Are-Dogs-ism. She likes to explain obnoxious male behavior by reference to animal behavior. If men are reluctant to do their share of housework, it is because they inherited from their "anthropoid ancestors" a resentment of work and "a positive ambition to do nothing, which women do not share... Females, be they gorillas or worker bees, are naturally busy." (Does Greer forget the Queen Bee? Oh, well.) "Lionesses do the hunting to feed their cubs and their father." "Male animals are conspicuously less busy than females, yet somehow the human male has convinced the human female that he not she is the worker." Never mind the accuracy of Greer's zoology. What on earth does it have to do with the chores of living? Are we really compelled to divide our labors as lions or penguins or cockroaches divide theirs?

Another clue is Greer's tendency to elevate minor complaints about men to the status of gender oppression. Not only are men bellicose and competitive and slovenly. They also "pay less heed to traffic lights" and "brake harder and later." Oh, and they fish too much. Greer has a real bee in her bonnet about fishing, which I must say would seem to be rather a benign pursuit, unless you are a trout. Yet she sees it as yet another male plot to escape us. She insists, darkly, that "women of any age are not welcome on the riverbank." The danger is everywhere.

Then there is Greer's rush to condemn with whatever opprobrium springs to mind, however contradictory or baffling. Men are obsessed with penetrating women—but they are also obsessed with evading women, and therefore with masturbation. This is one of Greer's dicta on the subject: "Masturbation is easy; relationships are difficult." It is not quite as devastating as Lenny Bruce's remark that the nice thing about masturbation is that you don't have to send your hand home in a cab. Or consider the following assertions, at once absurd and unfalsifiable: "In some British circles, women are now expected to perform fellatio on demand." "In the last third of the twentieth century more women were penetrated deeper and more often than in any preceding era." "There are many, and more and more each day, who think a rectum has more character [than a vagina] and that buggery is more intimate than coitus." What British circles? How does Greer know? Why the syntax of social science, as if "deeper and more" were amenable to some sort of statistical proof? If men are perpetually fleeing intimacy, why would they seek a more "intimate" kind of sex? And why the preoccupation—and take my word for it, it is a preoccupation—with the supposed eclipse of the vagina by the rectum?

To establish her case that men in the United States and Western Europe (as opposed, say, to Afghanistan) are engaged in an unprecedented assault on womanhood, Greer defines all manner of medical interventions as attempts by "male-dominated governments" or the "patriarchal medical establishment" to subdue unruly females. "Women," she writes, "are the stomping ground of medical technology, routinely monitored, screened and tortured to no purpose except the enactment of control." (Notice

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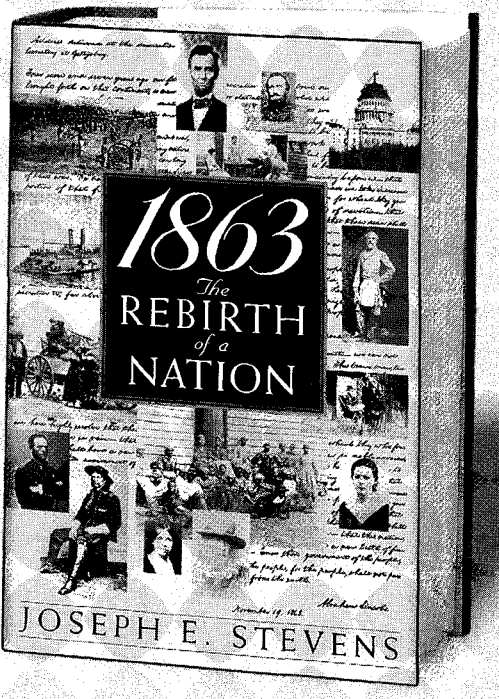

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the easy slide from "screening" to "torture.") Contraception is bad because it allows men to keep penetrating women, exposing them to "male hyper-fertility." If we are not actively involved in conceiving a child, we ought to be celibate or to have sex without intercourse, thus avoiding the "wastage of so many embryos." Our wombs, in other words, should determine the way we have sex. Again and again, anatomy is destiny. The only explanation that Greer can offer for the persistent popularity of intercourse (this is a mystery?) is its "symbolic nature, as an act of domination." Pity the woman who experiences sex symbolically.

THERE IS MORE. Screening for cervical cancer is bad because cervical cancer is not all that common, and also because the pap smear is not a foolproof test: it returns a lot of false positives and women worry when they have to go back to their doctors for a second time. Or as Greer puts it, "the result is an epidemic of terror." Why this should be regarded as a misogynist assault on the womb, as opposed to a medical procedure open to improvement, is left unsaid. Even a seemingly neutral medical instrument such as the speculum is an instrument of oppression. In Greer's dire description, "it's usually cold, extremely hard-edged and hurts, even if it does not pinch the tissues of the vaginal introitus. What hurts physically can also hurt psychologically...."

There is still more. Episiotomies—the minor incisions made to women's perineums during labor to avoid a tear—are bad, because they are terrifically painful and the pain can last for months or even years. (This is certainly not the experience of anyone I know, but maybe they are too intimidated by the patriarchy to speak of it.) Cesarean sections and hysterectomies are also bad—which is a more substantiated and fair enough charge; journalists have been reporting for years that the rates of both operations are going up, and for reasons that have as much to do with medical economics (fear of malpractice suits, for instance) as with good medical sense. But Greer depicts women who choose hysterectomies as victims of "a female predilection for self-mutilation," hopelessly out of touch with their essential wombitude. Women who want the operation because they have been truly uncomfortable or inconvenienced and want no more children will find this sort of uterine fetish patronizing in the extreme, and who can blame them? Greer is a hysteric about hysterectomies.

I do not mean to say that medicine is blameless, or free of biases, or undeserving of criticism. Indeed, feminists have long been among the most intelligent critics of the practices with which doctors have sometimes infantilized women. In this way feminists have helped to win welcome reforms, such as the establishment of alternative birthing centers in hospitals and the opening up of delivery rooms to fathers, and they have encouraged more women to become doctors. In 1998, 43 percent of entering medical school students in the U.S. were female, a fact that seems to undercut the idea of medicine as an unrelenting masculine citadel.

But Greer plays fast and loose with facts. She claims that "there is no pressure group within the medical profession lobbying for the right to save men's lives by regularly examining their prostate." This is wrong. Prostate cancer, like breast cancer before it, has become one of America's trendy diseases. And Greer's comparison rests on an odd notion of fair treatment. "Men have the right to take care of themselves, or not, as they see fit," she writes, "but women are to be taken care of, whether they like it or not." So men have the right to die young, but women do not? (Some patriarchy.) Nowhere is there any sense that in many parts of the world advances in medicine have helped eradicate one of the most oppressive fates imaginable for a woman: dying in pain and in fear, giving birth to a child whose conception was not her choice.

Greer exaggerates the coercive power of the medical profession. Nobody is obliged to get a pap smear. I doubt that any women in the United States or England are "pressured" by "the health establishment" and "the state" to have abortions. They are certainly not "required" to undergo "investigations of their pregnancies for which there is no treatment but termination." If a pregnant woman has "the tests, say for Down's syndrome," Greer claims, "and refuses the termination she will be asked why she had the test in the first place. And she will probably be talked into the termination." This is nonsense. For one thing, some doctors in England and America will now do surgery in utero for conditions such as spina bifida that have been diagnosed in a fetus. Moreover, some people would prefer to know in advance whether the baby that they are carrying has a birth defect, even if they would not have an abortion. And far from pressuring women to have an amniocentesis or to terminate a pregnancy on the basis of it, most doctors are reluctant to issue a direct recommendation of any kind on the subject, if only because they do not want to be held responsible for a decision that a woman may regret.

It is true that the availability of new medical tests makes it likelier that they will be used and even overused, and that they will encourage unreasonable or unethical expectations of our own perfectibility. Technology always creates its own imperatives. It is also true, as Greer says, that the aggressive expansion of the fertility industry means that many women will undergo expensive, protracted, and even painful fertility regimens that are ultimately disappointing—and that some of those women would have been happier had they never been given the option. And it is also true that we now have tests that diagnose diseases (in both sexes, I might add) for which there is no cure and no clear course of action, such as tests that detect the gene for Huntington's disease.

These are all fair and important points. So why does Greer caricature them? Her intensity is hardly an excuse for her demagoguery. Does fertility treatment really "cause far more suffering than it does joy?" Not if you are one of the many thousands of patients each year who end up with a healthy baby. And Greer's indictment of the medical profession is suffused with an offensive condescension toward women themselves. In her account, women who opt for hysterectomies for whatever medical reason are deluded self-mutilators who are allowing themselves to be "spayed." Women who have abortions have submitted themselves to "the gynecological abattoir." Infertile women who want a child ought to be purged of the notion through hypnosis. And women in general, she avers, "are driven through the health system like sheep through a dip." Like sheep? Through a dip?

IV.

IN A WAY, Greer's deprecation of women's minds, her denial of the capacity of women for intelligent choice and personal agency, is not so surprising. The logic of Men-Are-Dogs-ism demands, after all, that women be earth angels, and earth angels can easily be mistaken for ninnies. The womanly qualities that they display must always be qualities of the heart, not the head. And they must always be self-sacrificing. "Love of the father, love of the partner, love of the child, all remain for the vast majority of women, unrequited," Greer writes. "A woman's beloveds are the centre of her life; she must agree to remain far from the centre of theirs." This is the Tammy Wynette view of the world. It is certainly not a mature or nuanced picture of the twists and the turns of real love between real people. (In real marriages, even in good and lasting marriages, wives sometimes hate husbands and husbands sometimes hate wives.) Nor does Greer's line of thought comport particularly well with the fact

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that it is women who initiate more divorces, and who report greater levels of happiness afterwards.

"Women love all kinds of things, places, animals and people." We are to infer that men love no kinds of things, places, animals, and people. "They can love animals with such tenderness that they will die for them, whether in a burning home clasping an old cat or under the wheels of a lorry loaded with live calves for export. They love undaunted by ill-treatment, abandonment or death, returning good for evil. They do not kill the things they love but cherish them, feed them, nurture them, remaining more interested in them than they are in themselves. They do not come to love the objects of their love by fucking them." And so on and bathetically on.

It is not enough to point out that women commit many fewer homicides and other violent crimes than men do, which is manifestly true. Greer must also explain away the behavior of women who do commit such crimes, arguing that their brutality toward others is only "an outgrowth of self-destructive behavior." (This was the point sometimes made about Susan Smith, who was going to kill herself along with her two little boys but decided against it.) Aren't many male criminals also self-destructive? Don't men commit suicide—literally self-destruct—at a much higher rate than women do? Well, yes and yes, but never mind. We left the real world long ago.

GREER IS NOT CONTENT to rehearse the familiar argument that women often feel pressured by advertising to buy useless beauty products and to fret about the adequacy of their appearances. She must also refuse to acknowledge that clothes and make-up can ever be a source of pleasure or creativity for women, to contend dolefully that "preoccupation about her appearance goes some way towards ruining some part of every woman's day." Even having our teeth fixed is a coerced concession to false gender consciousness that starts us down the slippery slope to plastic womanhood.

Sometimes Greer must flatly deny that women do certain things that, in fact and to no great shame, they do. "I suspect that even if fertility clinics offer significant sums for oocytes women will not respond, not simply because being farmed of oocytes is painful and dangerous but because women do not regard their seminal material as light-heartedly as men do, and have no ambition to spread their genes through the ecosphere." But many women appear to harbor precisely such an ambition: egg donation is one of the fastest growing sectors of the fertility business. When a wealthy couple recently offered $50,000 for an egg from an Ivy League-educated woman, two hundred women responded within a day. When I interviewed the "egg donor administrator" at a fertility clinic in L.A. a year or so ago, she claimed that many women who give eggs are motivated in part by the desire to spread what they regard as their superior genetic goods.

Liberal feminists and egalitarians of both sexes have usually made it a premise of their thinking that none of us can know precisely the essence of womanhood in the absence of social conditions. "What is now called the nature of woman," John Stuart Mill observed, "is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others." American women in 1999 are no longer such constricted houseplants, clipped to bend in one direction and unable to grow in another direction, but neither do they exist in a sexless utopian zone. Surely humility on the subject of what constitutes a whole, a real, an essential woman is in order.

But not for Greer. She is quite sure of what a real woman is. The secrets are in her possession. "Real" women are women who live in sexually segregated societies. Chinese women were real before Western marketing distorted them. The postmenopausal woman is authentic, too, because menopause "burns off the impuri-

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ties," which is a strange way of referring to the capacity to bear children. But the "whole woman" is also, confusingly, a woman who is acutely aware of her uterus at all times—to the point of embracing the old canard about the wandering womb as the cause of hysteria and the barrier to women's intellectual achievement.

THE WHOLE WOMAN is certainly not a woman who seeks to compete with men, to enter professions in which men have previously dominated. For she can have no hope of changing such male enclaves, and the men lying in wait for her there will humiliate her. Still less is she the woman who buys convenience food, wears make-up or otherwise enters with any enthusiasm into the capitalist marketplace. Greer's "whole woman" is just a sentimentalization of the natural woman. Her quarrel is finally with civilization.

This leads her to some very dotty ideas. On the harmless side, there is Greer's nostalgia for chicken-plucking, chip-frying, and the like, and her confident assertions that laundry was easier before the washing machine (you only did the washing one day a week, though a whole day a week), and that women were appreciated and respected more when they had to do all the cooking and therefore exerted a kind of authority as food providers. "That female role has now disappeared. It could only last as long as there was not a shop on the corner selling things more delicious than mother could ever make." It was just a matter of time, I suppose, before the shop on the corner metamorphosed into advanced monopoly capitalism.

But not all of Greer's nostalgia is quite so harmless. Her glorification of preliterate societies, and of female illiteracy in general, is very disturbing. "The preliterate woman lived within a self-validating female culture that was to be obliterated by the authority of the printed text. It is not until women learn to read that they internalize the masculine schema. When women become literate they are brought up sharply against the prevailing misogynies. They will only accept them if they are in the process of swallowing the masculinist cultural package of which they are a part." Oh sister, go and read *A Room of One's Own*, with its desperate yearning for the wide vistas of the word. Read *The Mill on the Floss*, with its unforgettable picture of what it is like to be a girl whose mind has always been called "quick" but who will never be permitted to set that mind to a task worthy of it. Read only the epigraph to *Sex and Society* by Martha Nussbaum, in which a Bangladeshi woman named Rohima explains how learning to read transformed her life:

> If there had been no change, then how could I have learned and understood all this?... Mother asked: 'What do you see in the books?' I said, 'Ma, what valuable things there are in the books you will not understand because you cannot read and write.' If somebody behaves badly with me, I go home and sit with the books. When I sit with the books, my mind becomes better.

It is astoundingly naïve to think that illiterate women have no way of being "brought up sharply against the prevailing misogynies." In societies in which women are veiled, kept in purdah, stoned for adultery, infibulated, chronically underfed, burned for their dowries, or cursed when they bear girl-children, they know a thing or two about misogyny. I would venture to say that women also knew a thing or two about misogyny in early Europe, where they were persecuted and tried as witches and generally thought more susceptible to deviltry, where their suffering in childbirth was complacently regarded as the price they had to pay for Eve's apple.

YET GREER'S IDEALIZATION of miserable women—which is to say, her denial of their misery—is worse than naïve. It is cruel. Consider her defense of female genital mutilation—the ritual, practiced in a number of African countries, whereby young girls are subjected to the forcible amputation of their clitorises (and in some cases of the inner lips of their vaginas as well). These disfigurements have devastating results, which range from life-threatening hemorrhages and infections in the immediate aftermath of the operation to chronic infection and infertility later. Genital mutilation also makes it unlikely that a woman will ever be able to experience sexual pleasure. That is the point of the ghastly procedure. It is designed to make women more tractable.

Greer contends that the "criminalization of FGM can be seen to be what African nationalists since Jomo Kenyatta have been calling it, an attack on cultural identity." But this coarse outburst of multicultural romanticism assumes that cultures are monoliths, and that the only objection to FGM comes from outside African societies—from the World Health Organization or from pampered Western feminists. In fact, there are passionate critics of genital mutilation in all of the countries in which it is practiced; and they have been sufficiently influential to have gotten it officially outlawed in some of those countries. Moreover, there is no reason to consider African opponents of FGM—such as the valiant young women who have sought asylum in Europe and the United States to avoid being cut—any less authentically African than those who uphold it. And even if you could establish a reliable scale of authenticity, the moral value of protecting human beings from forcible mutilation must take precedence over the preservation of cultural customs. Mustn't it?

Ever eager to denounce the West, Greer asks how we can possibly condemn FGM when we countenance plastic surgery, genital piercing, and the circumcision of male infants. "If an Ohio punk has the right to have her genitalia operated on, why has not the Somali woman the same right?" A right to FGM! But circumcision is not comparable to clitoridectomy; the comparable operation for a male would be the removal of most of the penis. Unlike FGM, circumcision is generally regarded as medically neutral or mildly beneficial. And unlike FGM, it is not practised in the absence of adequate sanitation or anesthesia. Plastic surgery in the West is not forced on very young girls. (Greer insists on referring to "women" who undergo FGM, when it is usually children between the ages of five and twelve, who have no choice in the matter.) And even if you want to argue that women who choose plastic surgery are constrained to choose it by the "beauty myth," a reasonable person would still recognize that being pinned down, screaming, by four adults with a knife is not quite the same as reading a copy of *Vogue*.

NOR IS GREER SATISFIED with her cultural relativism. She insists also upon a positive good for FGM, even if it flies in the face of her own pronouncements on women in the West. "Certainly in many of these cultures tightness in the vagina is prized by both men and women ... penetrating a tight, dry vagina causes pain but pain can be indistinguishable from pleasure in a state of high arousal." I see. Only Western women ought to be renouncing intercourse. Only Western medical practitioners are to be reviled if they suggest that an episiotomy can help to restore vaginal muscle tone. FGM cannot be bad for women, Greer contends, because women are the ones who perform it. But you don't have to be a man to mistreat a woman.

The problem with Germaine Greer is not only that she is no friend to men. It is also that she is no friend to women. What friend of women could have written this apology for their forced mutilation? What friend of women could have written most of this ugly and loveless book? When we are "brought up sharply against the prevailing misogynies" of our own time and place, we will have to number this famous feminist's misogyny among them. ■

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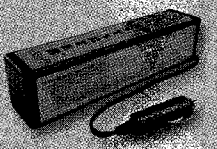

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Gods and Bodies

By ANNE HOLLANDER

The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky: Unexpurgated Edition translated by Kyril FitzLyon edited by Joan Acocella

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 312 pp., $30)

Nureyev: His Life by Diane Solway

(William Morrow, 625 pp., $27.50)

KYRIL FITZLYON'S English translation of Nijinsky's diary from the original handwritten Russian texts is a landmark in the history of modern art. The resultant book, which includes Joan Acocella's rich introduction and the translator's own preface and annotations, in fact shows to what a great degree Modern Art itself is History, meaning over. The objective detachment at work, the currency of the interpretations and the aesthetic syntheses offered, and the emotional attitudes expressed by the two people who produced this book place it firmly in an era beyond the reach of Modernism's original force, flavor, and aims, free from passionate entanglements with the sense of form, or the devotion to art as a continuum that generates its own path. As if he were a Renaissance painter or an Enlightenment writer, Nijinsky's art and life are now ready for detached inspection and analysis, with special emphasis on the society in which he lived and on his sexual and emotional history.

Analysis is impossible for the art of unrecorded performers. Everything depends on words. There are no films of Nijinsky dancing, and there are no living eye-witnesses. Since his modern era is so recent, this fact seems a much greater calamity than our lack of direct visual record for, say, Marie Taglioni, whose nineteenth-century dancing is as unknown to us as Salome's. The tenuousness of a dancer's artistic immortality is appalling. Knowledge of Nijinsky's performances must come from the many written descriptions and few photographs of him in actual motion, plus the drawings and the posed studio shots. His choreography, too, eludes exact retrieval, except for *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, which was transmitted and survives. *Jeux*, *Sacre du printemps*, and *Tyl Eulenspiegel* can be only lamely reconstructed, though again there are some pictures and the many things that people said and wrote.

What we have is this book. Nijinsky wrote all of it during the six and a half weeks between his last public performance and his first hospitalization, which was imminent as he finished writing on the last day, waiting to be taken to see a specialist in Zurich. That was in the spring of 1919, when he was twenty-nine. The book was intended as an urgent communication to the world. Nijinsky writes that he means to publish it as soon as he gets to Zurich, so that people will rightly understand him and profit from his knowledge of how the world ought to be.

Now published in its entirety for the first time, this dense compendium of pronouncements, complaints, memories, reports (of dealings with God as well as of quotidian events and physical details), thoughts, poems, letters, explanations, sermons, hopes (for love and understanding) and fears (of madness and global disaster) has become the only solid legacy of Nijinsky, the great modern genius of the dance. The French translation of 1933, also made from the original manuscript, omitted almost all of the Fourth Notebook, which consists of sixteen unsent letters in French, Russian, and Polish, of which ten are poems, the first fourteen addressed to living persons, the last two to Mankind and to Jesus. This group of letters was written all at once, during a break from the composition of the book itself. The last in its entirety goes like this:

Au Gèsue

Je suis gèsue
Je suis gèsue
Je suis gesue
Je suis gesue
Je suis un sue
Je suis un sue
Je suis je suis je suis je suis
Suis je suis je suis je suis
Je suis suis je suis suis je
Je ne veux pas sent je suis
Je me suis je suis je suis

The one addressed to mankind is similar, only it is nineteen pages long.

JOAN ACOCELLA'S long biographical and interpretive introduction is a boon to the reader of this difficult book. She sketches the world of art contemporary with Nijinsky's short career, along with the drastic historical events in progress that affected and helped to compromise both that world and Nijinsky's art, and the ways his madness may be seen as part of them all, inflected by the mythology of the mad artist. She sets Nijinsky's writings in the context of his recent conversion to Tolstoyanism, which helps to account for the dominant spiritual theme of the diary, its constant emphasis on what God wants, along with its intermittent insistence on how bad it is to eat meat, to value money, to yield to lust. We also learn of Vaslav's unstable older brother Stassik, institutionalized in his teens, his fate a perpetual source of dread. Acocella offers detailed analytical information about Nijinsky's mental condition, not only describing it in the light of present knowledge, but describing also the efforts made to deal with it personally and professionally at the time.

There are also many details about the practical and internal difficulties faced by an independent ballet company, especially in times of war and revolution. Acocella's account includes hair-raising stories of Nijinsky's failures as a leader and an administrator—at first of his own small, short-lived troupe (formed after his marriage and his subsequent rupture with the Diaghilev enterprise), of which the two-month London engagement had to be canceled after two weeks. Later, after he had rejoined the Ballets Russes in 1916 for a season in New York, a second season was followed by a disastrous four-month, fifty-two-city tour, during which Nijinsky was put in charge of the company and tried to run it on Tolstoyan principles, outraging everybody and losing a fortune into the bargain.

Acocella is a dance critic, but she has also co-written a textbook on abnormal psychology. She emphasizes this diary's

ANNE HOLLANDER'S new book, *Feeding the Eye*, will be published in the fall by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

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importance as the only record of an artist's descent into insanity as it was occurring, made by the artist himself. Crudely put, this document shows how Nijinsky felt as the emotional dispositions that had created a dancer and a choreographer were being transmuted into psychosis. For her essay, Acocella has studied not only works on varieties of mental illness, but specifically those on Nijinsky's malady, notably Peter Ostwald's *Nijinsky: A Leap into Madness*, which appeared in 1991 and focuses on the evidence of his schizophrenia.

For this new edition of the diary, in order to guard the integrity of Nijinsky's writings during his breakdown, it was clearly necessary to preserve every last bit of incoherence and discontinuity in Nijinsky's text, every obsessive repetition, every vagrant association, and all the odd twitches of syntax or diction—each one well annotated—together with every personal account of defecation and masturbation, to say nothing of ingestion, and every uninhibited reference to public figures and family members. Also important, it seems, was preserving the traditional contempt for the first editor and publisher of this diary, the dancer's wife Romola. Her edition of 1936, in English translation, was heavily rewritten, rearranged, and truncated so as to omit most of the sex and the defecation and the most uncomplimentary references to herself, along with the most boring and incomprehensible grotesqueries of the text.

Acocella is careful to acknowledge her respect for Romola's "editorial achievement," and calls her version "comforting" because of the rewrites. Still, her interpretations of Romola's editorial decisions sound needlessly condescending, as in "Romola probably found this primitive." Unhappy Romola! I cannot believe that she was ever the villain. Mainly she was the daughter of a dreadful mother, Emilia Márkus, the Most Famous Hungarian Actress of Her Day (help!). Nijinsky's diary is full of loathing for this lady and her steady falsity, and full of love for his wife, even though he does call Romola "an un-twinkling star." He also writes that "I like my wife's nose because it has feeling." He keenly feels her withdrawals of immediate sympathy and the presence of her constant anxiety. He often says that "my wife does not feel me," but he never seems to feel that she does not love him.

Romola had no sense of this text as an important medical document, and she knew it would be all that was left of Nijinsky in the unaccountable future. How to conjure the great dancer through the scribbles of a madman with religious mania? It is very noticeable that there is almost nothing concrete in these pages about dancing or performing, nothing about training, preparing, or choreographing, nothing about other dancers and their work. Romola's efforts to make Nijinsky's diary reveal him as a great artist and a great man as well as an undeniable lunatic, and to preserve him from the very scrutiny now brought to bear on the totality of this horrific document, are somehow moving. She wrote her own book about her husband in 1934 to supplement and to complement this mad screed before she published it. She was not highly intelligent, or talented as dancer or writer, or in much rapport with the actual phenomenon of genius; and she was acutely of her time. But they did love each other, and she did her best as that hapless personage, The Artist's Wife.

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Vaslav Nijinsky in "Tyl Eulenspiegel," 1916

Vaslav Nijinsky was born in 1889 (along with Adolf Hitler, Charlie Chaplin, and Ludwig Wittgenstein) to a couple of itinerant Polish dancers who played summer theaters and circuses on both sides of the Russian-Polish border, and who taught him to dance and to perform when he was little. When his father eventually decamped, his mother moved the family to St. Petersburg and set about getting Vaslav into the Imperial Theater School, which he entered at the age of nine. Though a poor scholar, he was clearly a dancer of genius. His mother must have known it all along.

His rise was swift. He entered the ballet company at an advanced rank, and he was famous in St. Petersburg by the age of eighteen. Through Diaghilev, he was world-famous only two years later: "*le dieu de la danse*." Acocella suggests that this early glory could have been quite destabilizing to someone prone to mental imbalance, and that Nijinsky's later written repetitions that he is God may have their source in this precocious triumph. Maybe; but you would think that his superlative dancing would anyway feel like divinity to him. "I am God within the body," he wrote. This had nothing to do with public acclaim or with Tolstoy.

Serge Diaghilev had crowned several prodigious cultural projects in the first decade of the twentieth century with his creation of the Ballets Russes. He had brought the Impressionists to St. Petersburg. He had brought Feodor Chaliapin to Paris. Then, in 1909, he gathered the best Russian dancers, choreographers, composers, and designers together into a new company and set them to work, spiriting

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them away from traditional service to the Czar and into the fecund air of Paris, from which their combined talents might dazzle the West with a fierce, kinetic modernity. Nijinsky was the centerpiece of the ensemble, with his amazing elevation and his unguarded, erotic stage presence; and at the time he was Diaghilev's lover as well.

Acocella describes Nijinsky's sexual liaison with Diaghilev as the last of the youthful dancer's several homosexual connections, which were customary, to improve his status or his career. She finds the diary confirming that Nijinsky's private sexual excitements and fantasies were all about women, and that he would often seek out prostitutes rather than find a homosexual milieu to frequent. She points out that the androgynous flavor of his most famous roles was created by Fokine, the choreographer of *Spectre de la rose* and *Schéhérazade*, whereas Nijinsky's choreography for himself in *L'Après-midi d'un faune* was purely masculine.

His marriage to Romola in 1913, during the company's South American tour without Diaghilev, was a stunning blow to the latter, who perhaps could not imagine the possibility, but the diary does make it seem perfectly natural to Nijinsky. Romola was a dancer, though not a very good one, and her presence with the troupe on this tour, Acocella says, was essentially as a groupie in pursuit of Nijinsky. She was very pretty and very eager, and the susceptible Nijinsky certainly wanted to marry her, even though she may initially have been set on by Mother, or perhaps by the need to escape Mother. The betrayed Diaghilev instantly fired him when he heard of the marriage. Nijinsky thereafter had to spend two years of the war interned at his mother-in-law's house in Budapest, miserable in her forced company, out of work and not dancing. God within the body had no scope. The beliefs and the feelings expressed in the diary must have begun to crystallize then; what he tried to work on was a system of dance notation.

The diary is wonderful as well as horrific. It is not a real diary, but a mixture of confession, memoir, and tract. Nijinsky's straight narration about the things that happened to him is limpid and self-possessed, and his observations are clear-sighted about other people's honesty, fear, or vanity: "I have noticed that people are not interested in new pictures, because they think that they do not understand art. They buy old pictures in order to show that they have 'love for art.' I realized that people like art but are afraid to say to themselves 'I understand art.' People are very timid because critics frighten them ... critics think that the public is stupid." Later on he says: "I think that many people smoke because they think they look impressive that way. I have noticed that people who smoke have a proud bearing."

But the fey note unfailingly recurs, and the flatness of tone is mad and maddening. Writing in 1919, as the Paris Peace Conference was taking place, he remarked upon magazine photographs of the convening statesmen: "Lloyd George's smile reminds one of Diaghilev's smiles. I know Diaghilev's smiles. All Diaghilev's smiles are artificial. My little girl has learned to smile like Diaghilev. I have taught her because I want her to give Diaghilev a smile when he visits me." "I have a sensitive smile because I feel God. Wilson's smile is sensitive because he feels God. However, Lloyd George's smile is silly because he does not feel God." Later: "I know that Frenchmen feel God, but they do not understand him yet, and therefore they make mistakes."

He achieves rhetorical feats: "The English do not like dancing because they have a lot of money in their stomachs." And this: "I have healthy guts because I do not eat much money." Or: "My hair is moving, for I feel it. I ate a lot and therefore feel death." Later he writes: "I know what an eye is. An eye is a theater. The brain is the audience. I am the eye in the brain. I like looking in the mirror and seeing one eye in my forehead. I often draw one eye.... I like an eye with hair on the head. I am God's eye, and not a warlike eye."

Nijinsky, the artist of the body, is always denouncing the intellect in favor of reason (meaning intuition or sensibility) and feeling (meaning instinctive sympathy). He writes: "I do not like Shakespeare's Hamlet, because he thinks. I am an unthinking philosopher." Later: "I am reason, and not intelligence. I am God, for I am Reason. I am the philosophy of reason. I am the true, not invented, philosophy." He is not afraid of physical death, but of the deadly element in life. He frequently says that criticism is death, or that thinking is death, or that machines are death, or that all the various conventional hypocrisies that he calls "tricks" and "habits" are death. Later: "I am not afraid of anything. I am afraid of the death of

Harvest

Loved one, it has been my privilege
to calculate your sightings, near and far,
to trail in the wide wake of your effulgence
and watch you flare
in anger and arousal everywhere.

And on the windy afternoon of which I speak
burrs on my socks that stick and prick
unshakeable as memories were clinging
for I was running interference with
the Lilliputian pickers raiding the dwarf trees
while the ruddy sun, your other lover, was with you,
hurtling toward the clarifying west.
And you were there, too, laughing with the rest,
head tilted at that angle where you catch
that other, higher frequency you hear.

And strewn across the low fields by the sea,
boulders that had bounced on landing
burned as if to mock us two,
alone or paired across the melted stubble,
some enormous, some mere rubble,
steaming coals, alive as anything
—except the careening nugget who thinks he owns you,
whose influence was evidently flowing
from face to face across the crowd
arrayed in purple turtle fur and Lycra.

Then I was with him, and he let me see
our small careers: the gash and gleam,
the eddy, the crash-and-burn, the writhing quiet,
and it was very clear:
loving isn't oneness, but aloneness.
The other stands out sharp up there;
each wears a sweater her own color,
no two the same.

Which is why just then, while you were all out
looking for the right one to bring home,
some emblem of fulfillment to get us to winter,
I kept to my bag of apples by the haycart,
though the day was far too full to carry a message,
no field disturbance, no slightest reason to doubt you,
and the need in me burned as it does in pure imitation,
still I stood there alone in the pumpkins without you.

Jonathan Galassi

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reason. I want the death of intellect ... intellect is stupidity, and reason is God."

He strikes a prophetic note: "I would like factories to be destroyed, because they spread dirt on the earth.... I want people to realize that they must give up all rubbish, because there is not much time left to live. I feel the suffocation of the earth.... I feel that the earth is suffocating, and therefore I ask everyone to abandon factories and obey me. I know what is needed for the salvation of the earth." He has an urgent desire to help improve not just the world, but each person, including his wife and her mother: "My wife came and kissed me and I felt glad, but God did not want me to show my joy, because he wants to change her." On Emilia: "My wife's mother is a hypocrite ... she is a wicked woman.... She will be furious when she reads these lines, but I will be delighted because I will have taught her a good lesson." Later: "I am God in man. All people will be gods if they do what I tell them. I am a man with faults, because I want people to correct their faults. I do not like people who have faults they have not corrected. I am a man who has tried to improve himself." And near the end: "I will write a lot because I want to explain to people what life is and what death is."

Nijinsky's main text is divided into two parts, the first called "On Life" and the second "On Death," but otherwise there are very few paragraph breaks or divisions of theme. The restless short sentences, and the repetitiveness and the inconsequence in the material, make reading it very difficult for more than a few minutes at a time. The temptation is to skim for gems and juicy parts; and sympathy for Romola does keep creeping in. In the end we must be grateful for the present dauntless effort to bring Nijinsky's entire outpouring into the present vexed world, just as he wished. We can never see him, but perhaps we can at length profit from listening to him.

WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED to Nijinsky if Diaghilev had not created the Ballets Russes and taken it to Paris in 1909? That's easy. He would have stayed in St. Petersburg and danced (unless madness overtook him) in the same ballets that Rudolf Nureyev appeared in fifty years later at the start of his career, performing in the same company, trained in the same school in the same techniques, having lived the same student life in the same city. The difference between Imperial Russia at the turn of the century and the Soviet Union in 1960 was astoundingly small, with respect to the character of that experience. Balanchine had it, too, in the 1920s.

In her biography, Diane Solway makes Nureyev's version sound very much like what Nijinsky's fellow-student Tamara Karsavina describes in her memoirs. Whatever the Russian regime or epoch, however, these gifted Russian ballet dancers (and some notable others) required swift transfer to the West to fulfill their talent, after their pricelessly exacting apprenticeship at home. Solway points out that Nureyev's own autobiography begins with his defection, not with his childhood and training.

One basic difference between Nijinsky and Nureyev, who was immediately likened to him when he appeared in the West, was that Nureyev's origins were Tatar, not Russian or Polish. He was Muslim and nomadic, descended from Genghis Khan's Mongol hordes, not Christian, not Slavic, and not at all rooted in the Russian earth. He liked to fancy himself as romantically Asiatic—soft and cruel, brutal and tender—but he was also essentially godless, the opposite of Nijinsky, who felt inhabited by God. Nureyev's father had been an observant Muslim, even had early priestly ambitions, and his mother wrote only in Arabic throughout her life. But both parents later joined the Party, spoke Russian, lost the religion, and embraced the Revolution.

His father became a career army officer and was fighting the Japanese in 1938, the year of Rudolf's birth. He was absent from home during the boy's early childhood, while home shifted around until the family settled in Ufa, capital of the Republic of Bashkir, far from Moscow and even farther from St. Petersburg, now renamed Leningrad. There was no conception of a dancing career for Rudik, who was the only boy born after three older sisters. His parents hoped he would distinguish himself in the Party, as a reward for their loyalty to it.

ONE FACT sharply separated Nureyev not just from Nijinsky but from all the notable dancers schooled in St. Petersburg whose careers flowered in the West. Nureyev did not start there until he was seventeen, almost prohibitively late. All his life he couldn't lose the sense that he would never catch up. Something had to compensate for effortless technique, which could be achieved only through years of intensive training from childhood. What he had was temperament, fanaticism, and erotic appeal, besides being a born dancer and a born star.

Nureyev began learning folk-dancing in kindergarten and instantly excelled at it, just as he did at music. He was good enough to perform in concerts and competitions and to win a prize at the age of ten, although his parents were thinking of it all as a childhood pastime. His own passion to be nothing but a dancer apparently came to life when he was first exposed to the ballet at the age of seven. And Ufa, far from being a cultural desert, then harbored a number of "undesirable" artistic and intellectual exiles from ex-St. Petersburg and Moscow. There had been an opera house there since 1938 and a ballet company since 1941. Some of the dancers had been trained in Leningrad, or had even danced in the fabled company, now called the Kirov.

With Father not yet home to disapprove, Mother took the children to a ballet performance there in 1945: gold, red velvet, lights, music, glittering creatures. Little Rudik was never the same again, even while continuing his stellar folk-dance appearances. The Ufa ballerina Anna Udelstova saw him perform during his prize-winning tenth year and immediately recommended classical ballet training, starting with herself, but aiming for eventual study in Leningrad. And so, in the teeth of parental disapproval, he began studying ballet with local teachers in the ballet studio attached to the company, which he joined on the stage as a paid extra after he turned fifteen.

Nureyev got out of Ufa and into the Kirov School by getting the attention of its scouts who scoured the Republics for talent, which meant entering and winning ballet competitions where scouts would be present, even as far away as Moscow; and getting his mentors and teachers to recommend him in Leningrad itself; and

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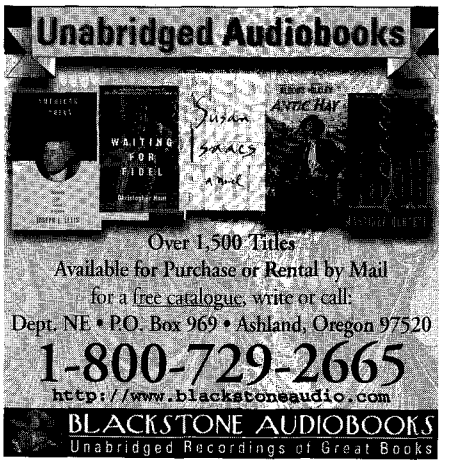

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getting himself known for energy and persistence, confidence and resolve, and supremely magnetic stage presence. Beauty, talent, and skill were not the qualities that were attributed to Nureyev by his early supporters. He was also known for ignoring rules, skipping correct procedures, and having no sense of belonging to any sort of collective. During the two and a half years in which he danced with the Kirov Company, he was always changing the steps of his solo, altering the costume that he was given, or arguing his way out of decisions that had gone against him. He always got away with it. He thrust his tunnel-visionary way to the top of the ballet world with will, nerve, and unanswerable star quality, more or less like Genghis Khan.

SOLWAY'S THICK LIFE OF Nureyev is very tiring. The cumulative effect is total exhaustion, since this dancer was a burning rocket, and the book records every detail of his combustion, his trajectory, and his final extinction. The physical character of the material helps, too. Once Nureyev's career restarted in the West—after his dramatic defection at twenty-three from the Kirov Company during its Paris tour in the summer of 1961—his story is essentially the life of a working dancer, which consists of class, practice, rehearsal, and performance, over and over and over again. This was magnified by a factor of ten in the case of Nureyev, a driven man who came to lead this taxing life all over the world, eventually flying from continent to continent, from ballet company to ballet company, increasingly unable to breathe without a theater to star in every night.

It is no wonder that Balanchine backed away from inviting Nureyev to join his own balanced and interactive company. He had no use for a one-man show, he needed team players; and also he found Nureyev's Leningrad style to be fifty years out of date. Balanchine nevertheless had respect for Nureyev's ability to be consumed by a role, to be transformed into a young nobleman drunk with love, or a prince crushed with grief, or a chieftain mad with power; and eventually he did hire him for a character part in a ballet of *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* that was never produced. When Peter Martins was still a fifteen-year-old apprentice at the Royal Danish Ballet, he called Nureyev a "dirty dancer," meaning, he said, "not clean, sort of messy." With all his incandescence, Rudik could never get past the look of overdoing it. He was always the provincial out to show them.

Nureyev's passion for dancing became mingled with his passion for Erik Bruhn, the elegant Danish *danseur noble* who represented the refined perfection that Nureyev felt he could never attain. The reticent Bruhn was himself essentially unattainable, though the two had a long and devoted, if stormy, relationship. Nureyev felt that he could forever learn from him, and was forever pursuing and seeking while Bruhn retreated. In other respects, apart from a few early intimacies with women, Nureyev came to enjoy a vigorous and promiscuous gay sex life in the West, though no evidence exists about his adolescence. Homosexuality was illegal in the Soviet Union; things happened that left no trace. Nureyev contracted AIDS and died of it in 1993, after surviving fourteen years and only stopping his ceaseless performing when he could barely speak or stand. When he couldn't dance anymore he became a conductor, trusting his lifelong love and knowledge of music to keep him on the stage, under the lights, receiving applause.

THE REST OF NUREYEV'S STORY is about the breathless doings of a superstar, one of the first superstars to appear in the '60s, right along with the Beatles. Solway further helps to wear out the reader with her six hundred pages of relentless journalese, full of wrenched and hasty transitions from practical and professional details (with numbers and sums of money) to celebrity events (with complete lists and descriptions) to exorbitant expenditures to character sketches to potted contemporary history to small dramatic scenes between Rudolf and others. Added to this is our sympathetic weariness at the sense of how much labor went into this biography: Solway has interviewed hundreds of people whose lives intersected with Nureyev's, however fleetingly or indirectly, in several countries, and she has unearthed hitherto untapped original sources. Tracking this flaming projectile has been manifestly hard work. Her resulting account has more historical and sociological interest than artistic interest; and in a way so did Nureyev himself. With a follow-spot on his vibrant figure, the book is a swift tour of global culture from 1961 to 1993, with a special view of the Soviet Union from 1938 to its dissolution.

For the balletomane, Nureyev's chief contribution to the art was his galvanizing effect on Margot Fonteyn, which resulted in their truly magnificent and long-lasting partnership. Not only that, the entire Royal Ballet felt Nureyev's electrifying influence, which he exerted later on other ballet companies in Paris, Vienna, and elsewhere, always with excellent results. Fonteyn at forty-three was considering retirement when she first danced with twenty-four-year-old Nureyev, who applied some severe Leningrad rigor to her practice with him and imparted some of his own ferocious drive to this much-revered English lady. Together they reinvented the traditional pas de deux: in their updated version, instead of a dignified man enhancing a brilliant woman, a star couple struck sparks from one another. (Not everyone was seduced. The critic John Martin moaned, "She has gone ... to the grand ball with a gigolo.")

AT NUREYEV'S DEBUT IN PARIS, SOON after his defection in 1961, Nijinsky's sister Bronislava was in the audience. Nijinsky had died in 1950, after thirty years of incarceration; but Bronia, herself a dancer and a choreographer, had doubtless never ceased to miss his unique dancing since 1919. Marveling at Nureyev performing the Bluebird pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty* in Paris—just as Nijinsky had done at his Paris debut in 1909—she exclaimed, "He is the reincarnation of my brother." Here was the same wild, bird-like, unearthly beauty; the same wondrous elevation; the same display of an unbroken St. Petersburg artistic tradition.

At his London debut later that year, in an original Ashton ballet to a Scriabin score, as Nureyev rushed downstage bare-chested in a swirling red cloak, Diana Cooper (another survivor of Paris, 1909) whispered to Cecil Beaton: "He is better than Nijinsky!" There was the same thrilling intensity, the savage purity, the look of dancing for himself. And the great Karsavina, now living in London, who had been Nijinsky's partner in the early Diaghilev seasons as well as his fellow-student, announced to ballet students in 1962 that "the legend of Nijinsky lives again in Nureyev."

One can only assume that these lovers of the real thing had long been vainly waiting for its second coming. They saw what they longed to see. Some of it was there; but the world had changed. The training was similar, but the state of mind and soul was a different thing. Nijinsky had arrived in Paris under Diaghilev's wing as part of an avant-garde breakthrough in the modern classical dance, an advance that claimed attention and expected appreciation only from artistically sophisticated audiences. He was encouraged to choreograph in avant-garde modes, even at the risk of outraging that public rather than engaging it. Nijinsky's artistic personality could never have prospered under superstar circumstances, as it was able to do by the reach of Diaghilev's forward-looking artistic aims. Nureyev, coming of age within a limiting and static Soviet vision of a classic high art, came to the West and turned the bal-

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let into a prodigious sensation for everybody, full of sex and glamour, not only on many stages but also on television.

Nureyev operated from the beginning at a less adventurous level than Nijinsky, always remaining within the classical mode, sensationalizing it rather than reforming its basic themes and qualities. He made his name by changing the male ballet-dancer from a strong and gentlemanly performer with aristocratic appeal into an exciting renegade with a feral moodiness and a pliant sensuality. Edward Villella had gone the other way, appearing wholesome, athletic, and cheerful on Balanchine's stage, where Peter Martins was being the gentleman; but the strongest postmodern trend was toward gender confusion and baroque rule-breaking, at both of which Rudik was a winner. Balletomanes finally came to prefer Baryshnikov's controlled simplicity and openness—and this, perhaps, was more like what Nijinsky was aiming at, back in the ancient modern times at the start of the century. ■

The Narrator

By JOHN MULLAN

Daniel Defoe: The Life and Strange, Surprising Adventures by Richard West

(Carroll and Graf, 427 pp., $26)

WE KNOW Daniel Defoe in ways that his contemporaries did not. For us, he is a novelist. Yet his novels are only a small part of what he wrote. In libraries it is possible to find anthologies that draw from his huge output of polemical and journalistic writing, from his sallies into political controversy or economic prognostication, from his works of religious instruction, from his verse (of which he was especially proud). Most of this now engages only the academic researcher. It is the cluster of fictional autobiographies—"novels," as we now call them—written near the end of a long Grub Street career that have survived and become classics. On the rare occasions when Defoe put his name to anything that he had written, he invariably announced himself as "the Author of The True-Born Englishman," a satirical poem for which he was renowned in the early eighteenth century. Now it is above all as the author of *Robinson Crusoe* that he is famous.

For us he is not just a novelist, he is the originator of novels. *Robinson Crusoe,* which was published in 1719 when its author was almost sixty, has become a kind of myth (and one of the most frequently republished and translated books in history). It won its special status partly because it seemed to invent both a modern hero and a modern genre. Its protagonist was "the individual," in all his particularity and ordinariness: the character whom we have come to expect from our novels. Its title page may have advertised *The Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (a promise jokily echoed in the title of Richard West's new life of Defoe), but it demanded to be judged by a standard that would be claimed by all later eighteenth-century novelists: the standard of "probability." Crusoe tells his extraordinary story in the level tones of one who trusts to facts, dates, inventories; what he calls "particulars." It is only in these particulars, authentically recorded, that the workings of Providence might be discovered.

Robinson Crusoe is all about starting from scratch, its narrator telling us how he learned for himself, on his island, to manufacture clay pots and Christian theology. Crusoe the castaway has to be narratively as well as materially self-reliant. He looks back on his life and he has to make sense of it: the story of a resourceful adventurer, which is also the story of an individual delivered by God. And the rest of Defoe's novels, produced in a characteristic flurry of invention in the four years after *Robinson Crusoe*, all follow this pattern.

All of them are first-person accounts of lives of adventure, opportunism, resilience, and, finally, penitence. None had Defoe's name attached to them in his lifetime. There are fictional autobiographies of "wicked" women, *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana*, lives of a pirate and a soldier of fortune, *Captain Singleton* and *Colonel Jack*, and fake historical memoirs, *A Journal of the Plague Year* and *Memoirs of a Cavalier*. They mimicked authenticity so successfully that the last two were treated as genuine historical documents for half a century after Defoe's death.

Yet these "classics" were mostly invisible to Defoe's contemporaries. The genre of "the novel" did not exist; it was only with the publication of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* in 1740, nine years after Defoe's death, that this new literary species began to be recognized. When they first appeared, Defoe's tales of rogues and chancers were nothing to do with polite literature. This accounts for their anonymity: they may have sold well, but they scarcely deserved, with their ignoble excitements, to have a named author. Defoe-the-novelist only became an established character in the nineteenth century. His novels were popular, as we know from the number of editions that they went through, but no critic of his own time stoops to notice them, and no writer talks of imitating them. The original eighteenth-century editions of the novels are often very rare, precisely because of their vulgar popularity. They were produced to be consumed, not to find their way to the safe preserve of a gentleman's library.

IN HIS OWN LIFETIME, Defoe was famous, or notorious, for other reasons. He appears in *The Dunciad*, Alexander Pope's brilliantly spiteful gallery of contemporary scribblers, as "restless Daniel," in doubtful honor of his prolificacy. Even though Pope's poem was composed in the years during which Defoe's novels were being published, he describes him as a writer of "Verses, as well as of Politicks"; Defoe's fiction, which one would have thought ripe for Pope's educated disdain, is not mentioned.

Defoe was well enough known in his own day, but it was for what he did before he turned to those novels. Most infamously, he had been a satirist, and had been put in the pillory for his mockery of High Church Tories in *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* (1702). He had been a political propagandist, working for different parties and ministers, shifting allegiance with the changing political winds. He had been a successful versifier, rapidly turning topical controversies into rough, sardonic rhyme. He was the most resourceful, energetic, adaptable hack in British literary history.

It is this other life of authorship that biographies of Defoe must explore. It was a life in which two influences predomi-

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nated. The first was money, all the more so for Defoe as he seems to have lacked the financial cunning of his fictional protagonists. He tried to be a businessman—manufacturing scent from the anal glands of civet cats, or buying into a Tilbury brickyard—but his schemes kept ending in bankruptcy. The pen had to be his living.

The second pressure was politics. Born (probably) in 1660, Defoe lived through a period of dynastic and religious conflict. He almost certainly fought for the Protestant rebels in Monmouth's disastrous insurrection against the Catholic James II in 1685. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, he worked for, and seemingly worshipped, William of Orange, who had ejected James from the throne. Later he was a government spy under Queen Anne, as her ministers maneuvered for England's Union with Scotland. He was a hack, but he met monarchs and prime ministers.

IN TELLING OF DEFOE'S LIFE before the novels, the biographer has opportunities as well as challenges. This is not just a matter of the intrinsically fascinating material. (While Defoe's own boasts about his political influence are suspect, he was certainly a participant in conflicts that shaped his nation.) Narrating Defoe's life is also a chance to understand the energies and the beliefs that produced his apparently unprecedented fiction. A particular, dissenting brand of Protestantism runs through his life of writing into his novels, which bring the Protestant duty of self-examination to imaginative life. (No reader can doubt the motives of Roxana and Moll Flanders more sharply than do the narrators themselves.) Through all his shifts and compromises, his Protestant allegiance remained his resource. It gave the zest to his patriotism, England being seen as the home of toleration and individual liberty. It gave him his faith in modernity, which released the God-given powers of human reason from timidity and superstition. And it justified commercial progress, which he thought the blessed consequence of each individual's virtuous striving for self-improvement.

It was Defoe's brilliance as a novelist to question in fiction what he appears to have trusted in life. All his fictional adventurers discover that with opportunity comes fear—that the commercial world is one in which you can make yourself, but also lose yourself. In *Moll Flanders* (1722), the pursuit of "fortune" becomes an addiction to thieving, and only the anti-heroine's belated acceptance that she deserves hanging for her crimes saves her from just this fate. In *Roxana* (1724), the metaphor for commercial endeavor is the life of a courtesan, and Roxana's hunger for independence seems to lead her, in a dark and uncertain conclusion, to have her own daughter murdered. Defoe's protagonists are famously self-reliant, but they are also on their own. The novels might celebrate individualism, but they also bring alive aloneness. These stories of self-made men and women of fortune would be nothing without their terrors.

Each of Defoe's leading characters lives with the dream of making himself or herself a "gentleman" or "gentlewoman." When he died in 1731, Defoe had just finished an instruction manual called *The Compleat English Gentleman*, which imagined the ways in which one might make oneself a gentleman without benefit of "Antient lineage." What we might call "social mobility" was a value for Defoe, and for his characters. (It is one of the reasons that several of them travel to America, to make themselves anew.) Defoe even turned the same trick of self-fashioning as all his protagonists by changing his name. Every one of his novels begins with the narrator telling us that he or she, cut loose from any familial destiny, has changed his or her name. It is a nice detail that, at some stage in his thirties, the novelist ceased to be plain Daniel Foe, as he had been christened, and added the grand-sounding "De" (though other writers continued for some time to use the older name when referring to him).

RICHARD WEST IS not the first to find everywhere in Defoe's life the evidence of an adaptability that reminds him of the fictional protagonists. And he recognizes that sometimes this seems to have been a compulsion as much as a necessity. Most of the few letters written by Defoe that have survived are those that were hidden in secret service files by his government paymasters. They reveal a man obsessed with disguising himself. His boss, the subtle chief minister Robert Harley, wrote to him as "Alexander Goldsmith," a commercial traveler who boasted of being able to "talk to everybody in their own way" while he gathered information. Defoe was to complain in his autobiographical *Appeal to Honour and Justice, Tho' it be of his Worst Enemies* (1715) that his reputation for adopting different voices led to his being talked of as the author of almost anything disreputable: "whenever any Piece comes out which is not liked, I am immediately charg'd with being the Author." Such was a penalty of mastering the arts of impersonation.

This poses a special problem for biographers. Most of Defoe's writing is anonymous or pseudonymous, and takes on assumed voices. Some of these voices even speak the opposite of what we might expect to be his views: in the nineteenth century it was discovered, for instance, that he had written, under the instructions of a Whig ministry, for the most extreme Tory journal of the period. Richard West usually admires Defoe's protean powers, but he is forced to call this work "sordid and shameful." In a secret service report to the Under-Secretary of State, Defoe himself complained of being "posted among Papists, Jacobites and enraged High Tories, a generation who I profess my very soul abhors." But he had a job to do, muddling and blunting their attacks on the government. Without the accidental discovery of this report, over a century and a half after it was written, we would never have known of this particular phase of Defoe's resourceful hackwork.

MUCH ACADEMIC WRITING on Defoe spends its time simply worrying about what he wrote. In 1988, *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe* by P.N. Furbank and W.R. Owens confirmed what many had privately thought, by demolishing the thin—or often nonexistent—evidence for the traditional attributions of many of the works in the Defoe "canon." Generations of scholars for almost two centuries, dedicated to rescuing Defoe from undeserved neglect, had persuaded themselves of their ability to recognize his handiwork. Until recent decades, Defoe was widely considered a sub-literary writer, and Defoe scholars were a small band with a kind of proprietorial dedication to their man. His versatility allowed them to find his fingerprints everywhere in the copious anonymous writing of the period. Now Defoe is more common academic property, and the attributions are being undone.

West's decidedly unacademic new biography ("not ... even scholarly," he cheerily concedes), is entirely confident that it knows Defoe's "style" when it sees it. As West has chosen not to read much of the disputed output, his confidence might be forgiven. He also has a short-cut past another difficulty faced by previous biographers: how to include all the historical information necessary to an understanding of Defoe's political preoccupations. Paula Backscheider's biography—it appeared in 1989, and it is the fullest to date—is suffocated by the "background" information that she thinks is necessary. Many admire it, but it is well-nigh unreadable.

While relying heavily on Backscheider's research, West sidesteps the problem. He confines his own historical knowledge to "two great books": Macaulay's *History of England*, from the 1850s, and G.M. Trevelyan's *England under Queen Anne*, published in 1930. From these, the reader will find out plenty about the Duke

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and Duchess of Marlborough, but next to nothing about other historical matters of importance to Defoe: class, scientific change, financial revolution, contemporary intellectual debate.

IT IS NOT A BAD THING to have attempted a popular biography. It is possible to be alive to history and yet to write accessibly about Defoe. James Sutherland managed it superbly in 1937, in his expert yet entertaining biography (long out of print, of course). But then Sutherland, a professor of English, wrote in a time before the absolute divide between the academic and the popularizer, the student and the general reader. West dispenses with any academic virtues. There are no dull pedantries such as page references, notes, or a bibliography. Where most paperback editions of Defoe long since gave up "correcting" his prose, West happily uses modernized (but unidentified) versions of the novels, in which the dramatic rambling of Roxana or Moll is tidied into "proper" sentences (thus entirely losing the checks and self-corrections of their interior monologues). He believes that Defoe's *Tour of the Whole Island of Great Britain* is "his masterpiece," and devotes about a quarter of his book to it—but he works from an old paperback edition which is actually abridged from Defoe's original.

All this is laziness masquerading as accessibility. It is a pity, as there is some interesting and original writing buried in West's book. He represents Defoe as the greatest of all journalists, and he does have a feel for, and a genuine knowledge of, this aspect of his work. Single-handedly, Defoe produced his journal, the *Review*, three times a week for nine years. Though mostly given over to political news and foreign affairs, it included gossip, answers to readers' correspondence, religious and philosophical discussions, obituaries, and human interest stories.

West has spent a good deal of time with the *Review* and it has convinced him that Defoe is "the first master, if not the inventor, of almost every feature of modern newspapers." This is hyperbole based on ignorance of earlier periodicals, yet West's use of this periodical, Defoe's most substantial undertaking as a writer, is frequently engaging and revealing. Although officially devoted to public events, the *Review* includes unexpected allusions to the author's own life. West has combed its pages and he outdoes previous biographers in his collection of its autobiographical hints and digressions, bringing alive a work that usually only preoccupies doctoral students.

There can be no doubt that West has also diligently read his editions of the *Tour* and the novels. Unfortunately, he proves this with a lengthy précis of each one in turn. These slow synopses take up about 150 of the book's 400 pages. The chapters on the *Tour* are an anthology of some of its interesting passages: appreciative but pointless. The chapters on the novels are more obtuse. West is dismissive of literary critics who find "sub-texts" in Defoe's fiction, yet his plodding paraphrases show that, whatever the follies of academics, literature lives by interpretation.

Plot summary keeps missing what is most important about the novels: that they are in the first person. We see Crusoe, Moll, and the rest trying to understand their own motives and to make sense of their own experiences. The drama of the novels is in their narrators' efforts at interpretation. Above all, they scan their own lives for signs of Divine Providence. Looking for a "sub-text" is just what they are doing, and just what keeps their stories alive. The individual tells his or her story to make himself or herself exemplary—to escape solitariness. Defoe became one of the most influential of literary pioneers by being true to this need. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 5

wrongfully prosecuted, convicted, and incarcerated.

STUART E. ABRAMS
New York, New York

Swan song

TO THE EDITORS:

I was disappointed by David Grann's one-sided story on the Stand-Squillacote-Clark espionage trial ("The Stasi and the Swan," April 19). Grann conducted a lengthy interview with me about my friendship with Kurt Stand, which proved to be a waste of my time—not a word or fact from the interview made the story, nor were interviews of any other friends or acquaintances of Kurt or Terry Squillacote included.

In my long acquaintance with Kurt—going back to the early '80s—he was no "devoted Marxist-Leninist ... consumed by an archaic religion" but rather a dedicated democratic socialist and champion of fundamental social change through open, democratic means. My depiction of Kurt as dedicated to democracy, his family, and his community clearly didn't fit into Grann's fevered narrative in which all three defendants are painted with a single broad brush.

Only near the end of his cloak-and-dagger adventure does he finally acknowledge that, prior to the sting operation, the FBI's physical searches and nonstop electronic surveillance of the Stand-Squillacote home never found that the couple had passed any classified information to a foreign power and that information in the documents Terry gave to an undercover agent already had largely appeared in *The New York Times* and elsewhere.

I'm sorry that THE NEW REPUBLIC let its ideological agenda obscure the real story—the FBI's and the Justice Department's manufacturing of a criminal case against Kurt Stand and Terry Squillacote where no crime had been committed.

WILLIAM H. MOSLEY JR.
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITORS:

David Grann is apparently not sure whether he should be horrified or just snide about American leftists who did not embrace cold war ideology. At any rate, many TNR readers might also have been interested had Grann explored the uses of state power in the case against Kurt Stand, Terry Squillacote, and James Clark. Grann's report provides enough of the facts. But it fails to remark upon a legal system in which Stand and Squillacote received 17- and 21-year sentences, respectively, when there was no evidence that they ever actually violated the federal espionage law or ever had an opportunity to pass "damaging material." This result comes in large part from application of conspiracy laws to their political and social associations, which spanned half their lives. That some people would find their activities odious is one thing. Grann evidently does. But we are supposed to be living under a government of laws, not of the mob. It was simply not rational for the government to pursue these people with such extreme charges that carry such excessive punishments, using a judicial system to intervene into their private lives. A citizen of the last remaining superpower ought to have a problem with that.

LISA FOLEY
Cheverly, Maryland

DAVID GRANN REPLIES:

The story does include myriad facts from my interviews with Kurt and Terry's friends, which was the only way I was able to reconstruct their story in such detail. It also includes a quotation from one of Kurt's longtime friends, Marty Horning, as well as from Kurt's mother and attorney. More important, it includes dozens of quotations directly from Kurt and Terry, both from wiretaps and from my interviews with them. Together, all of these not only describe what they did but also raise the question: Were their sentences too severe for what they had done?

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NEW YORK DIARIST

American High

HIGH-VERSUS-LOW IS A SHOP-worn intellectual debate. I didn't see the point back in the late '60s, when I was going to college and heard middle-aged academics proudly explaining that the Beatles now meant far more to them than Mozart. That didn't say anything about Mozart or the Beatles; it was just a way of announcing a new twist in one's oh-so-complicated sensibility. The debates that are provoked by such pronouncements are of little interest to anybody who really cares about music; they're for the pedants who can't wait to turn off the music, all the better to hear the sounds of their own voices. The more that you're engrossed by different kinds of music (or different kinds of art), the less you're going to care for comparisons that are by their very nature too crude to tell you much of anything. And, anyway, what's so strange about liking different things for different reasons? What's the problem with seeing greatness in radically divergent forms? Haven't people always felt that way?

THE WONDER OF THE SURVEY OF AMERIcan art and culture between 1900 and 1950 that Barbara Haskell has organized at the Whitney Museum of American Art is that the high-versus-low problem simply goes away. Haskell presents high. She presents low. And we go through "The American Century" and experience the exhilaration of both. There is a lushly mystical Joseph Stella landscape, and some clips of couples dancing the lindy, and a chromed-metal skyscraper cocktail shaker by Norman Bel Geddes, and a magnificently austere, red-yellow-blue-and-black abstraction by Burgoyne Diller. And each item is given its exact weight. This gigantic show is something special: a blockbuster guided by a freewheeling yet discriminating sensibility. Haskell lets each object shine. And she manages to make it all add up, much the way things add up in life—not perfectly or all at once, but gradually, roughly, over time. (Part two of the show, covering the second half of the century, goes up in September.)

AN AMERICAN AVIDITY FOR FRESH, STRIKing, unforgettable images animates nearly every gallery. This avidity is announced almost at the start, with John Sloan's dashingly informal, light- and snow-filled *Backyards, Greenwich Village*. From there, a free-flowing visual logic takes hold. Haskell combines her American avidity with an American discrimination; she gives us the space needed to make sane, clear-eyed estimates of remarkable achievements, such as John Marin's explosively casual watercolors, or some 1903 film clips of New York by Thomas Edison, or a couple of twinkling Calder mobiles. And the pace of the show, which is packed yet surprisingly unhurried, allows us to take the measure of works of infinitely less value, such as Thomas Hart Benton's *Bootleggers*, without feeling that we're being sold a bill of goods. Haskell regards art both as art and as a reflection of a culture. She generates different kinds of visual experiences—higher, lower (there are those words again)—and we take it all happily in stride.

THE TOP FLOOR, COVERING THE FIRST two decades of the century, is pretty close to being a curatorial masterpiece. The story begins with a dark, plum-colored gallery full of portraits and genre scenes that suggest the weight, the comfort, and the troubling undercurrents in "The Age of Confidence." From there the show takes us through the exploding life of the early twentieth-century city, the radical decorative look of art nouveau, and the beginnings of an American abstract art. Here, as well as later in the show, the generous selection of photographs—a medium that brings art-as-art and art-as-sociology so very close—is perfect for giving us the tones, the textures, the ambience of different times and places. And film clips interestingly complicate the mix, as in the galleries devoted to the '20s, where a few minutes spent watching Dudley Murphy's 1929 *Black and Tan*, with Duke Ellington and his Cotton Club Orchestra and lots of soft-shoe dancing, set the mood. Yet, even in this razzmatazz section of the show, Haskell finds quiet spaces, where we can take in the atmospheric yet hard-edged nightscapes of George Ault and Georgia O'Keeffe, and Hopper's intimate, sometimes cozy restaurants, and Florine Stettheimer's superbly stylized romances of city life. The show is full of surprises. Turn a corner, and you're in a red plush haven, filled with Donald Deskey's Art Deco furniture from the Roxy Suite at Radio City Music Hall. And, a few steps away, there's a Gerald Murphy abstraction, in which all the fixings of the cocktail hour are arranged to create a purist allegory.

THERE IS ONE UNPARDONABLE LAPSE, IN the "Postwar America" section. A photograph of an A-bomb exploding, probably over Nagasaki, printed on a big translucent screen, is hung in such a way that we can look through it and see fashion photographs by Irving Penn and Richard Avedon. Aside from that spasm of annihilation-chic, there are only the kinds of oversights and missed opportunities that are inevitable in an enterprise of this size and complexity. I wish there were more folk art. Although Walker Evans is much in evidence, the presentation of his photographs is rather helter-skelter. There ought to be more emphasis on Elie Nadelman, one of this century's grandest sculptors and a consummate student of fashionable life. The film of Martha Graham and her company, in a 1961 performance of her 1947 *Night Journey*, is shown on too small a screen to have any impact.

STILL, THIS EXHIBITION IS ALMOST ALWAYS eye-filling. The hanging is strong and clear. Paintings are given space to breathe, so that the emotional shimmer of smaller artists (Isabel Bishop, for instance) emerges. And some of the juxtapositions are inspired. Hopper's famous *New York Movie*, in which we see, in the shadows of a theater, an usher in a downcast mood, is given a risky presentation, sandwiched between glossy photographs of '30s movie stars and a small theater, where we watch clips from *Gold Diggers of 1933*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *On Your Toes*, and other movies. I would have expected the Hollywood glamour photos and the movie musicals to derail Hopper's dark-toned view, yet the effect is the reverse. The historical context complicates his great painting. We feel Hopper's daring. We see what a surprising weight he can give to this movie world, with its silvery images.

THIS TERRIFICALLY ENJOYABLE SHOW HAS an unfettered, all-American-all-the-time sense of quality. Thinking about it, I remember a disc jockey whom I was listening to years ago as he did a biographical riff on Bob Dylan, which ended with Dylan at long last reaching "the lonely plateau of the art form." The pretentious-naïve twist of that phrase had a nutty freshness—and a truth—that has stayed with me. You might say that the Whitney's survey of American art and culture between 1900 and 1950 is about how artists have kept going for that lonely plateau of the art form, again and again—by hook or by crook, along highways or back roads. In "The American Century," we see hundreds of artists, up there on their lonely and not-so-lonely plateaus. This is quite a sight.

JED PERL

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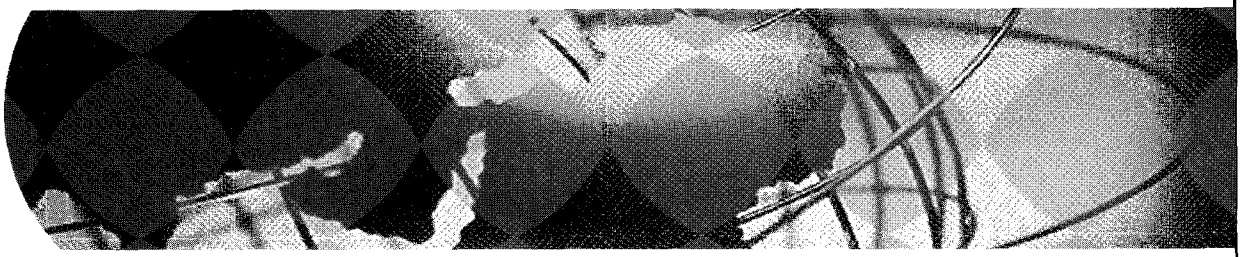

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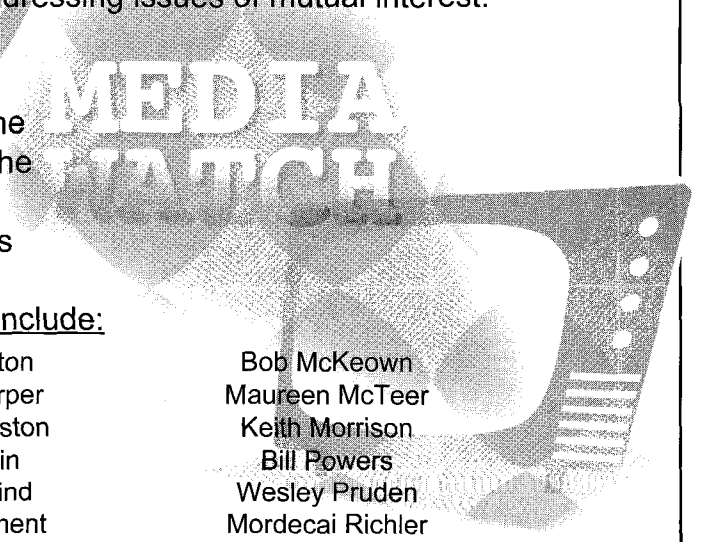

Panelists Include:

Peter Brimelow	David Halton	Bob McKeown
Iona Campagnolo	Steven Harper	Maureen McTeer
Linda Chavez	David Johnston	Keith Morrison
Barbara Cochran	Herb Klein	Bill Powers
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Gov. Howard Dean	Sebastian Mallaby	Dr. Margaret Somerville
Reuven Frank	Sen. Eugene McCarthy	Emmett Tyrrell Jr.
Linda Frum	Barbara McDougall	Barbara Dafoe Whitehead
Frank Gaffney	Ann McFeatters	Ken Whyte

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